

The current conflict between Israel and Hamas offers a clear distinction between good and evil.

Israel took control of the Gaza Strip as a result of the Six-Day War in 1967. It granted self-governance to the region in 1994, and in 2005, unilaterally withdrew its forces.

The resulting Hamas government has since militarized Gaza and used it as a launching site for continuing and escalating attacks against the civilian Israeli population, with the avowed objective of wiping Israel off the map.

The Arab Spring welcomed by the Obama administration brought the Muslim Brotherhood to power in Egypt. During its brief tenure, it opened a road for the mass importation of weapons to Hamas. These weapons, and others smuggled in by sea, were strategically placed in schools and hospitals and fired upon Israeli cities without provocation.

As Churchill once said of Britain: Israel did everything it could to secure peace. Perhaps it did too much.

The result was thousands of rocket attacks and many terrorist incursions by Hamas aimed solely at the civilian population. Israel finally did what any civilization must do under such circumstances: it finally fought back.

Hamas has deliberately staged its attacks from hospitals, schools, and mosques, using children as human shields, leaving the Israelis the Hobson's choice of enduring the killing of their own population or taking out the instruments of destruction that are deliberately sited in schools and hospitals. They have chosen to defend themselves.

There is absolutely no doubt of Hamas' objectives and that of its allies: they have been crystal clear and unwavering on their intention to destroy Israel and kill every Israeli. They seek to eradicate the Jewish homeland, whose history in the region stretches back more than 3,000 years.

Their allies have been intent on annihilating every Christian and Jew in the Middle East, and they are well on their way toward achieving this goal. It would be the height of naivete to believe that it will stop. Yet, this administration, and many on the Left, seem to view the two sides as moral equivalents. Many on the Left even portray Israel as the aggressor.

Israel has made the decision to by force demilitarize Gaza for its own survival. It is now making serious progress and degrading Hamas' ability to make war. That is the only true path to peace.

Yet, the Obama administration is now working to halt Israel's progress and allow Hamas the time to resupply and regroup and resume its attacks. This serves only the objectives of Hamas and is a prescription for prolonged war and bloodshed.

Hamas has broken every cease-fire it has agreed to, and Israel has abided by every cease-fire, often holding return fire for hours after Hamas has broken

these accords. There is no reason to believe that Hamas will abide by future cease-fires the moment it has recovered its war-making capabilities.

Why would this administration interfere in this manner, the effect of which is to take sides against the only pro-Western regime left in the Middle East?

Today, all that stands between a peaceful and free world and a fanatical fascist caliphate stretching from the Bosphorus to North Africa is the state of Israel and the influence of the Western democracies, particularly that of the United States.

In 1929, Churchill warned of Britain's irresolution in the Middle East. He said: "Any appearance of lack of will-power on the part of the British government or of lack of confidence in its mission in these countries blows like a draught of air on the dull, fierce embers."

Mr. Speaker, at this perilous hour, let us not repeat the mistakes of history.

ADDRESS OUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon, I stood at the back of the Senate Chamber and watched a critical debate. Under the leadership of Chairman RON WYDEN of the Senate Finance Committee, his partner, Ranking Member HATCH; Chairwoman BARBARA BOXER from California, CHRIS MURPHY from Connecticut, BOB CORKER from Tennessee, and Senator TOM CARPER from Delaware held forth on critical legislation to be able to help America deal with our infrastructure crisis.

America—it is no secret—is falling apart and is falling behind. It is well overdue for us to have a robust, important 6-year reauthorization to deal with our transportation needs.

We can't do that unless we resolve the funding conundrum. We have been limping along. We can't even get through the current 27-month extension without a summer slowdown, cutting back on critical Federal funding for contracts around the country.

What the Senate did was tackle this issue head on. They had a funding proposal that was fairly debated, where they were able to provide enough funding to get us through the end of the year, but not so much that it allows this Congress off the hook to slide into the next Congress, and probably the Congress after that, but instead, face up to our responsibilities now.

Mr. Speaker, the presentation of Senator CORKER from Tennessee urging us to be grownups and move forward, and Senator BOXER talking about the critical needs and not to be waylaid by this fantasy that somehow the Federal Government should abandon its commit-

ment to a National Transportation Highway System that we initiated under President Eisenhower, that somehow that is a thing of the past, turn our back on it, slash transportation funding, and just kind of wait and see what happens around the country—she was eloquent and forceful. Again, we have watched Senator MURPHY and Senator CARPER be focused on that which we need to do.

Mr. Speaker, we need to address and embrace the bipartisan Senate vote yesterday: 79 bipartisan votes to be able to do our job, avoid the summer shutdown, and do so in a way with a funding approach that is much more sustainable and reasonable, not the so-called pension smoothing that is ill-advised on so many levels.

Two weeks ago, Democrats in the House of Representatives were united: 99 percent supported what is, essentially, the Senate outcome. That didn't prevail on the floor of the House in a motion to recommend that I offered. But Democrats didn't pick up our marbles and quit. We actually provided the votes necessary to keep the issue alive and send the suboptimal Republican approach across to the other body. There weren't enough Republican votes to pass it, but we kept it alive hoping that we could see what happens on the Senate side, that we might have a stronger more reasonable proposal.

That optimism and cooperation on the part of the Democrats in the House was rewarded because we have this bipartisan proposal, which is, in fact, better, supported by 79 Senators.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the House to be able to address this bipartisan approach from the Senate. Allow us to vote on it. It ought to be the first step in our being able to avoid the summer shutdown and be able to get on with the 6-year bill.

Rarely have we seen the stakeholders so united. The American Trucking Association, the road builders, the U.S. Chamber, building and construction trades, the bicyclists, and the engineers. We watch across the country the people who build, who maintain, and depend on our infrastructure united, supportive of the approach that has emerged from the United States Senate. Even as we speak, they are contacting congressional offices, urging Members support the bipartisan Senate approach.

I respectfully urge the Republican leadership to allow those voices to be heard, to heed the stakeholders, heed the American people, give them a bill worthy of voting on. It will pass overwhelmingly, and we will be doing our job.

SPURRING TEACHER EDUCATION MOVEMENT FOR STEM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, every country must deal with and answer the