pose a threat to the Western world; but also they pose a threat to those positive elements among the Muslim world that would seek to be part of the world community and are responsible in their behavior and believe in the Western-style democracy or at least Western-style freedom for their people.

Unfortunately, over the years, as I have worked with the pro-Western elements within Afghanistan, I have been undermined over and again by our own State Department. This administration, and I really am sorry that I have to say this on the floor, this administration I honestly believe has had a policy, a covert policy, of supporting the Taliban, believing that the Taliban will at least create stability in Afghanistan. This is like the stability that Adolf Hitler brought to Europe, or the stability that prison guards bring to a prison. Yet we know that the Taliban's repression, their involvement with drugs and terrorism, is almost unconscionable.

Now, why do I say this administration has failed on this point? Because the administration has time and again undermined efforts on this Congressman's part to support those people who are opposing the Taliban in Afghanistan. My efforts and the efforts of other moderate Muslims have been undermined over and over again. In fact, this administration disarmed the opposition, was part and parcel of disarming the opposition to the Taliban, who then moved forward and wiped out their opposition in northern Afghanistan. It is a horrendous, horrendous legacy that we have to deal with now that this administration's policies have led to bolstering this horrible regime.

I would ask that this resolution be supported because it does offer another alternative. There is a king of Afghanistan who is pro-Western and a very reasonable person and tried to lead his country, where women had their rights respected under the former king. He was overthrown at a time just before the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. We need to work with that former king to bring about a democratic government. The people are not fanatics in Afghanistan. They are devoted Muslims, but they are not fanatics like the Taliban. They are dedicated people who love their families; yet they have been abandoned after their fight with the Soviet Union; they have been abandoned to forces like the Taliban.

Let me just say that the Taliban, by and large, and I know this very well because I, probably the only Member of this body now, was in Afghanistan during the war, fighting the Russians with the Mujadin, and I was there in 1988 with the Mujadin and I know the commanders. The Taliban are not the Mujadin who fought the Russians. Unfortunately, once the Mujadin had defeated the Russians, the United States walked away and we did not support the type of elements that would have created a more positive country in Afghanistan, and other anti-Western Muslim countries moved in to get control of the drug trade and to create this monstrous regime.

We need to reassert ourselves and to become a positive force for the people of Afghanistan so they can determine their own destiny through elections, and this Loya Jirgah would be the first step in doing that. That is part of their culture.

I would like to commend the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN), who over the years of me trying to find peace and getting rid of this horrible Taliban regime, he has been so active and supportive of my efforts, and over and over again he joined with me in calling for the State Department to provide me the documents to find out if indeed our State Department had this horrible policy of supporting the Taliban, and the State Department has not provided us the documents that we need to determine whether or not these charges are false or not.

What does that say if the State Department is unwilling to provide those documents? So I would like to commend the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN). He has done so much for the cause of peace and justice in this part of the world and to create a more stable world, especially concerning the Taliban.

I would ask for my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 414.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) for his strong support of this measure and for his kind words. I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) for coming to the floor in support of this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 414, as amended.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONCERNING VIOLENCE IN MIDDLE EAST

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 426) concerning the violence in the Middle East.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 426

Whereas the Arab-Israeli conflict must be resolved by peaceful negotiation;

Whereas since 1993 Israel and the Palestinians have been engaged in intensive negotiations over the future of the West Bank and Gaza;

Whereas the United States, through its consistent support of Israel and the cause of peace, made the current peace process possible;

Whereas the underlying basis of those negotiations was recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) by Israel in exchange for the renunciation of violence by the PLO and its Chairman Yasser Arafat, first expressed in a letter to then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin dated September 9, 1993, in which Mr. Arafat stated: ''[T]he PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence, and will assume responsibility over all PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators.'';

Whereas as a result of those negotiations, the Palestinians now fully control over 40 percent of the West Bank and Gaza, with over 95 percent of the Palestinian population under the civil administration of the Palestinian Authority;

Whereas as a result of peace negotiations, Israel turned over control of these areas to the Palestinian Authority with the clear understanding and expectation that the Palestinians would maintain order and security there;

Whereas the Palestinian Authority, with the assistance of Israel and the international community, created a strong police force, almost twice the number allowed under the Oslo Accords, specifically to maintain public order;

Whereas the Government of Israel made clear to the world its commitment to peace at Camp David, where it expressed its readiness to take wide-ranging and painful steps in order to bring an end to the conflict, but these proposals were rejected by Chairman Arafat;

Whereas perceived provocations must only be addressed at the negotiating table;

Whereas it is only through negotiations, and not through violence, that the Palestinians can hope to achieve their political aspirations;

Whereas even in the face of the desecration of Joseph's Tomb, a Jewish holy site in the West Bank, the Government of Israel has made it clear that it will withdraw forces from Palestinian areas if the Palestinian Authority maintains order in those areas; and

Whereas the Palestinian leadership not only did too little for far too long to control the violence, but in fact encouraged it: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) expresses its solidarity with the state and people of Israel at this time of crisis;

(2) condemns the Palestinian leadership for encouraging the violence and doing so little for so long to stop it, resulting in the senseless loss of life;

(3) calls upon the Palestinian leadership to refrain from any exhortations to public incitement, urges the Palestinian leadership to vigorously use its security forces to act immediately to stop all violence, to show respect for all holy sites, and to settle all grievances through negotiations;

(4) commends successive Administrations on their continuing efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East;

(5) urges the current Administration to use its veto power at the United Nations Security Council to ensure that the Security

Council does not again adopt unbalanced resolutions addressing the uncontrolled violence in the areas controlled by the Palestinian Authority; and

(6) calls on all parties involved in the Middle East conflict to make all possible efforts to reinvigorate the peace process in order to prevent further senseless loss of life by all sides.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, would not somebody in opposition have time allotted to them in opposition to the resolution?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) opposed to the resolution?

Mr. LANTOS. No, Mr. Speaker. I favor the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) oppose the resolution?

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, yes, I do, in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) will control the time in opposition.

Mr. RAHALL. How much time, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Twenty minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Con. Res. 426.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. GILMAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 426. The past several weeks have seen the situation in the Middle East spiral almost out of control. The underlying cause is that PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat is attempting to dictate Israeli concessions at the negotiating table through the unbridled use of violence; but this Congress, together with our friends in Israel and elsewhere, must join in saying no to that sort of violence.

As Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak said today, at the moment the Palestinian Authority and Arafat have chosen the path of conflict. With violence they will not gain a thing. We will know how to operate and stand united against violence to win, closed quote.

The current massive and fundamental violations of the Oslo Accords is apparently intentional, as underscored when the leaders of the Palestinian Tanzim paramilitary forces in the West Bank said last week that his organization would escalate the confrontations with Israel and not try to calm the situation. Marwan Barghuti said, and I quote, ''This blessed Intifada is looking ahead and the mass activity is moving forward,'' closed quote.

Mr. Speaker, it has been especially troubling to see the reaction to these troubles in the Arab world and the broader international community. An Arab summit fixed all the blame for the current violence on Israel.

1615

It called for rollbacks and freezes in Arab relationships with Israel and made no reference to any of the concessions that Israel has made in the peace process. It implicitly endorses the use of force by the Palestinians.

In the United Nations, things are little better. Countries whose leaders should know better, such as France and Spain, which have faced violence in their own streets, ganged up against Israel in endorsing an awful, one-sided resolution.

I was gratified that Israel, the administration and its friends, including Members of Congress phoning ambassadors, succeeded in persuading 46 member states to abstain, even though only four joined the United States and Israel in voting ''no.''

I want to commend those nations which could see their way to either abstaining or voting ''no.'' I am submitting a list of those nations voting on all sides of the issue for printing in the RECORD at the close of my remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time that the Congress go on record on one side or the other on this issue. That is why I felt compelled to introduce this resolution on behalf of myself; the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON), the ranking minority member on the Committee on International Relations; our distinguished majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY); and our distinguished minority leader, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT), condemning this Palestinian violence and expressing congressional support for the people of Israel in this time of crisis. On this measure we now have nearly 160 cosponsors.

This measure is also sponsored by a lengthy bipartisan list of Members of this body, which is a significant indication to the Palestinians that you cannot have if both ways. The government of Israel has made it clear to the world with regard to its commitment to peace time and time again, and yet we see that the Palestinian response has been more violence.

The facts on the ground also make it absolutely clear at this time that the Palestinians are in no position to be trusted as the custodian of another religion's holy sites.

I believe it is patently clear that Israel today does not have a peace partner, and that Prime Minister Barak is right to call for a time out until the true intentions of the Palestinians can be understood.

Accordingly, the resolution we are now considering finds that the Palestinian leadership not only did far too little for far too long to stop the violence, but in fact encouraged that violence. The resolution therefore condemns those actions, and urges the Palestinian leadership to vigorously use its security forces to stop all violence, to show respect for all holy sites, and to settle all grievances through negotiations, something our President has been attempting to do.

I must register my great disappointment that the administration merely abstained during the latest Palestinian-inspired U.N. Security Council resolution, which blamed everything on Israel. Our congressional response urges the administration to use its veto power at the U.N. Security Council to make certain that such appeasement does not again pass unchallenged.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support the pending resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 10 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and I ask unanimous consent that he be permitted to yield time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding me time, and I want to thank him for introducing this resolution, which I strongly support.

At the outset, Mr. Speaker, let me express on behalf of all of us in this body our regret at the tragic deaths which have resulted from the violence that broke out in the Middle East. As a grandfather of 17, I particularly regret the death of children, although I recognize that there was a reckless and cynical exploitation of children by the Palestinian leadership. Children have no place in such violent demonstrations, and their reckless exploitation I think stands self-condemned.

Mr. Speaker, once again the situation in the Middle East has turned from efforts to resolve the conflict peacefully to a new wave of violence that undermines the basis for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

No one is more supportive of the Middle East peace process than I am, Mr. Speaker. I also support the efforts to assist the Palestinians in their attempt towards moving towards self-government, increasing their economic well-being, and facilitating their cooperation in all areas with the Israelis.

The current wave of violence, however, Mr. Speaker, is simply unacceptable. It is undermining the very basis for peace, the notion that Palestinians and Israelis can live together.

In 1993, at Oslo, the principle of reconciliation was that the Palestinian leadership renounce violence as a means of achieving their political aims. In the last few weeks it has become obvious that Arafat and his group are unwilling to live up to this commitment.

At Camp David, the government of Israel made sweeping proposals that moved the two sides closer than they have ever been in reaching a historic agreement and reconciliation. Instead of making a counterproposal to this most important move, Arafat has encouraged, promoted, and abetted violence and refused to engage in further negotiations.

Even after an international summit prescribed the way of winding down this violence, the Palestinians continued their violent actions. These actions now show dangers of spilling over into other countries and have the potential of becoming a regional crisis. I therefore believe, Mr. Speaker, it is important that our resolution move forward at this time.

Under our resolution, Congress expresses its solidarity with the state and people of Israel, condemns the Arafat leadership for doing so little to stop the violence, calls upon that leadership to refrain from further encouragement of violence and to show respect for all holy sites, and to settle all grievances through negotiations. Our resolution commends past and present administrations in their effort to find balanced resolutions to this longstanding conflict.

Now all the parties in the region need to step back and to try to find the way to end this violence and to return to the negotiating table. That will not come very fast. We need to pass this resolution today to ensure that the Congress of the United States sends a clear message in support of peace and the State of Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 426.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the RECORD the results of the General Assembly vote on Israeli actions in occupied territory.

ANNEX TO MR. GILMAN'S REMARKS

[SOURCE: GENERAL ASSEMBLY PLENARY PRESS RELEASE GA/9793 EMERGENCY SPECIAL SESSION 20 OCTOBER 2000 14TH MEETING (PM)]

''Vote on Israeli Actions in Occupied Territory''

''The Assembly adopted the resolution on illegal Israeli actions in occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the occupied Palestinian territory (document A/ES–10/L.6) by a recorded vote of 92 in favour to 6 against, with 46 abstentions, as follows:''

''In favour: Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syria, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.''

''Against: Federated States of Micronesia, Israel, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Tuvalu, United States.''

''Abstain: Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Barbados, Benin, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Germany, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Poland, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tonga, United Kingdom.''

''Absent: Afghanistan, Angola, Bahamas, Belarus, Bhutan, Cambodia, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Gabon, Honduras, Kiribati, Lesotho, Malawi, Nigeria, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Solomon Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu.''

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H. Con. Res. 426 concerning the violence in the Middle East. If this body wishes to pass a resolution of support for Israel, then let us do it honestly, straightforwardly; not this way. Not through a resolution that is rife with bias and prejudice against the Palestinian people.

This resolution could have a lasting adverse impact upon our goal of peace in the Middle East. We are talking about peace between two peoples here, not between political factions in Israel and Palestine; factions that never want peace in the first place.

Regrettably, the language of this resolution is not balanced. It is not a straightforward vote of solidarity in support for Israel. If it were, I would not be standing here today. In sum, by passing this resolution, we abandon our role as an honest broker and take a step that undermines negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

Our words and our actions do bear consequences. In the past, we have passed resolutions in this body that do not reflect our greater interest and evenhandedness, and, as a result, people have suffered.

We should be standing here today, Mr. Speaker, urging both parties instead to return to the negotiating table and help them find their way back on a path toward peace. Instead, we have a resolution before us that is an indictment of the Palestinian people's desire for peace; and, indeed, it is an indictment of the Israeli people's desire for peace as well. This resolution condemns one side, and it inflames passions to do the opposite of continuing the peace process.

The true heirs to peace in the region, the peoples of Israel and Palestine, want the killing to stop. I know there is a deep despair, if you will, among Palestinians that they will never be able to live as a free and independent people. There is a feeling of frustration among the Palestinians that their lives mean less than Israeli lives. I know that the people of Israel have their legitimate concerns about the security of their borders.

We as Americans know and Israelis and Palestinians know that there is no military solution to the terribly difficult solutions that have made the Middle East a region of tension and conflict for so long. In today's climate, when at this very moment sees our security forces in parts of the Middle East on the highest of security alerts, this body must act in a manner that is in the best interests of our country and the security interests of America, Mr. Speaker, instead of passing provocative resolutions of this nature.

This resolution is about bashing the Palestinians as though they have not lost more than 130 lives in the conflict, as though innocent Palestinian fathers and sons have not been gunned down as they walked home, innocent of the conflict around them. We cannot ignore the fact that an American Red Cross worker was gunned down when he tried to intervene to save the child and his father.

I condemn these excessive and brutal actions, just as I strongly condemn the mob-lynching mentality of Israeli soldiers by Palestinians. I would note that Chairman Arafat said that he would conduct an investigation, and those responsible for this grueling act are in custody.

There is a line in this resolution that says perceived provocation should be subject only to negotiation, not violence. That line, of course, refers to the fact that Ariel Sharon deliberately timed his visit to the Nobel Sanctuary, accompanied by more than 1,000 Israeli security units. Sharon made his trip because he wanted to create strife among Palestinians, because creating strife among Palestinians would help him and those who follow him get rid of Prime Minister Barak's efforts toward peace, putting the Likud back in power in Israel.

It is about politics, not about peace, and, after all, the Israeli Knesset does return to session this Sunday, and the usual blackmailers in that country are at work.

This resolution only helps the extremes on both sides, those who never wanted the peace process to succeed in

the first place. It plays directly in the hands of Prime Minister Barak's enemies, enemies of peace in the Middle East. He knows it, and I would even have my serious doubts whether Prime Minister Barak would want to see this resolution pass in its present form.

For 7 long years, hard years, the U.S. has been the proud father of the peace process. We have worked as an honest broker in the Middle East. But we all know that to be an honest broker, you must be without bias. This resolution will do more to silence the proud U.S. role as an honest broker than all of the conflict of the region can do, for there is no honesty in the biased language of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN).

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the chairman of the committee and our ranking member, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. GEJDENSON), as well as the leadership of both Houses for introducing this resolution and bringing it up for a vote at this time.

This is the time for this House to express its solidarity with the state and the people of Israel. Back in September of 1993, Chairman Arafat wrote in a letter to Prime Minister Yitzak Rabin, the PLO renounces the use of terrorism and other acts of violence, and will assume responsibility over all the PLO elements and personnel in order to assure their compliance, prevent violations and discipline violators.

1630

In July of 2000, Prime Minister Barak made a proposal to the Palestinian Authority, the successor to the PLO, providing for statehood for the Palestinians, for withdrawal and secession of 90 percent of the land to the Palestinian state, for removal of jurisdiction of Israel and sovereignty of Israel from a substantial number of settlements now occupied by Israelis and, where the Israelis are now living, for substantial control in the city of Jerusalem, including two of the four quarters of the old city of Jerusalem, as well as a number of Palestinian areas within the municipal boundaries of Jerusalem.

That offer was rejected. As the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), my friend, pointed out, no counterproposal was made. There is a mythology going on here. There are two myths, which I would like to deal with. One is that the violence that we are seeing now was triggered by the trip, by Ariel Sharon to the Temple Mount. There are quotes throughout July and throughout August from Palestinian leaders, from officials in the Palestinian authority, which indicate that now is the time as Yasser Arafat found that world opinion was against his rejection and failure to make a counter to the Israeli proposal at Camp David, that now is the time to resume the Intifada. Those quotes included references to the fact that this Intifada will not simply be an Intifada of stones, but that the substantial amount of weaponry now held in the hands of Palestinians and the Palestinian Fatah militia would be utilized in this Intifada.

Sharon's trip was a pretext. It was not a reason for this violence. This violence had been planned. The quotations are out there, and the people of this Chamber, and the people of this country should understand that.

The tragedy of this, the young people who have died, in some cases the innocent people have died. But another one of the myths is that this is caused by rock-throwing young people with an excessive Israeli response.

Read yesterday's U.S. Today, ambulance drivers bringing rocks and ammunition to Palestinian militia, ambulance drivers claiming to be on a humanitarian mission, getting out of their ambulance and shooting assault weapons at Israeli troops. The fact is the general conventional belief about what is going on there is not accurate.

Mr. Speaker, I urge people to look more closely at what is happening and at this effort to try an armed uprising. This is the time for this resolution. I urge the body to adopt it.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 426, and I do so reluctantly out of my deep respect for the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), chairman of the Committee on International Relations. I, in fact, originally cosponsored this bill at the request of the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN), because of my deep admiration for how he has handled himself and he had done a fair, very fair job in being the chairman of our committee; and I was hoping that I would have the opportunity possibly to amend the bill to correct some of the unevenness parts of this legislation.

Unfortunately, I will not have a chance to amend it, and so I have to oppose it. It is appropriate, as I am certain was the intent of the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN), for the United States to be a force for peace in the Middle East, but we cannot do this by just at this time declaring that we are totally in favor of one side, which is what this bill does.

This bill unamended will not further the cause of peace. Instead of reaching out to those in Israel and Palestine who are committed to compromise and finding a just peace for all people in the region, this legislation simply and unequivocably backs up one side of the conflict. That is not how peace will be achieved.

America should be an even-handed peacemaker. Our goal should be a secure Israel living at peace with its neighbors; but in achieving this noble, yet difficult goal, justice for the Palestinian people has to be part of the formula. And that is why this has been able to go on for so long, because no one has been willing to accept that the Palestinians and their rights have to be brought into consideration.

All of these years, they have been ignored and treated as nonhuman beings; and they have legitimate claims that need to be addressed and honestly addressed. And, as I say, for so long, it was total intransigence even dealing with them.

Mr. Speaker, passing a resolution that condemns the Palestinian authority for the current violence on the West Bank, yet ignores the fact that of the 110 people killed that only 2 have been Israeli and over 100 have been Palestinian. This will not help the cause of peace. Ignoring that Ariel Sharon, a former Israeli defense minister, incited the current violence, he knew what would happen if he went there. And he went there anyway.

Any of the information that the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN), my good friend, said was available, to say there was a potential for violence, he knew. Yet, this defense minister arrogantly and irresponsibly went on this provocative trip to a Muslim Holy site.

This will not help our country to end the cycle of violence by simply ignoring that this act took place and that was what sparked this violence. There are people of good will on both sides, and we should be siding with them, the people of good will on both sides, rather than unconditionally backing up one side.

The policy of unquestioning support has undermined the willingness to compromise, which is what has kept this dispute festering for decades. Just as we should condemn the United Nations resolution, which was one sided, as this bill would do, let us not commit the same offense by passing one-sided resolutions that take us out of the role of being an even-handed peacemaker.

Seeking a secure Israel and justice for the Palestinian people is an enormously difficult endeavor, but one that deserves our best effort. This resolution does not further that cause, and I will have to oppose it.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time, and I first want to associate myself with the remarks of all who have said that we ought to condemn violence wherever we find it.

Mr. Speaker, I think everybody in this House agrees with that premise. I think we ought to also agree with the premise that the United States really is the best hope for resolution of the peace process as an honest broker. I agree with that premise, but agreeing with that premise does not, in my opinion, adopt another premise, and, that is, that the United States ought not to call things as it sees it.

That we do not adopt the facts as we find them. I find the facts to be as have been stated on this floor, that the two parties share a great enmity for one another, but I believe that one of those parties, Israel, has accepted the premise that they will exist in an area with Palestinians and with Arabs.

Regrettably, however, I must say to my friends that I am not sure that the Palestinians have accepted the premise that they will live in a neighborhood with the Israelis. It is my view that that is the nub of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, because that is the nub of the problem, it is appropriate for us to say so, and it is appropriate for us to urge both sides, but particularly, Mr. Arafat—and I say to my friend, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL), who is a dear and good friend of mine—that I think Mr. Arafat does have a responsibility, and to exercise that responsibility, to articulate to his people whom he leads, that peace is the only avenue to bring resolution, and that the 40,000 police force that he commands should, in fact, make a greater effort to maintain peace.

We know they cannot do it perfectly, but we would urge them, and do so in this resolution, to accomplish peace in the Middle East through reconciliation and not violence.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL), our dean of the House of Representatives, and my dear friend.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I do thank my good friend, the gentleman from West Virginia, for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very sad opposition to this legislation out of respect for my dear friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), chairman of the Committee on International Relations, who is one of the great chairmen of the history of this institution, particularly of the Committee on International Relations.

I am satisfied that those who have spoken for this resolution do so in the best of good faith, and I express my respect and my affection for each of them, Mr. Speaker. But this resolution is not in the interests of the United States. It is not in the interests of Israel. It is not in the interests of the Palestinians, and it is not in the interests of peace. I think that the United States has to look to see what its purposes in this area of the Middle East, which has had so much trouble for so long, are.

The United States has one goal and one purpose here, peace, and, very frankly, the continued existence of the state of Israel. But without a recognition of the role which we must play in this area, there will be no peace. And unless the United States has the courage to recognize that we have to be an honest broker in the area, trusted by all parties there and visible working for peace in the most objective and fair fashion, there will probably be no peace and we will see to peace and there will be no success for the United States in carrying out this great purpose.

The simple fact of the matter is, if we look at this legislation, the language of it makes it very plain, it condemns one side. I am not going to rise to say who is at fault here. I think that is something that needs a greater amount of time and debate. I want to rise to urge my colleagues to recognize the proper function of the United States, that of an honest, impartial respected, independent, honest broker. Unless we accept that responsibility, we will not be able to achieve the necessary trust in the area.

As I speak and as we sit here and as this matter is debated, the Middle East, Israel and Palestine are slipping towards a war. That war is not in the interests of the world, in the interests of Israel or in the interests of the Palestinians, and it is assuredly not in the interests of the United States.

I would urge my colleagues, reflect, first of all, as to whether it is in the interests of the United States to take sides in this matter, and very much so, whether it is in the interests of the United States to take sides in a matter on which we are the only Nation in the world who can speak as honest brokers, who can convene the parties to work together to eliminate a threatened war and a conflict. Hundreds of people have already died. More will die unless this country does something about it.

But to take sides, to ship weapons, to engage in support or castigation of one side, is not the way that we serve our purpose, the purposes of the world, the purposes of peace or the purposes of the Palestinians or the purposes of the Israelis.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand really for peace, to recognize the responsibility of the ability and the interests of the United States require us to be an honest broker, not a partisan, not a participation in castigation of one side or another, but rather leader in an attempt to see to it that the parties convene and talk.

Ask yourself if someone were to put out a resolution like this when we had a border difficulty with your neighbor, if that would engage you to accept them as the impartial mediator of the differences between you and that neighbor. I think the answer is very simple. It would not. If we have listened to the discussions today, the discussions have said one thing amongst those who support the legislation, and, that is, that the supporters of the legislation as well as the resolution castigate the Palestinians. Ask yourself if that works for peace, ask yourself if that enables us to function as honest brokers.

1645

Ask yourself if that is going to enable us to speak with the respect and the trust of both sides to them about the need for peace, and ask yourself whether you could expect to function as an honest broker and to encourage the parties to work together.

Mr. Speaker, there is little enough goodwill in the area now. There is hatred and ill will on both sides, and people are dying. I am not going to say who is at fault in this matter, because I do not believe that that is the function of this debate, nor is it in the interest of the United States to get ourselves in a position where we are obvious partisans of one side. But, if we read the language, if we listen to the remarks, ask ourselves, have these discussions talked about how we can, through this resolution, fulfill the great purposes and functions which can be those of the United States, by working for a meaningful, lasting peace; by achieving the trust of both sides; by holding the willingness of both sides to work together to resolve the differences.

It is with a very heavy heart that I see the killings over there, and I observe the numbers of people who have died. It is also with a very heavy heart that I see how many people are going to die, and when I see how the United States is throwing away, with this kind of resolution, the opportunity to achieve lasting peace for Israel and for the Palestinians, for the Middle East, and for the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the legislation before us. I do not question the sincerity of the authors of this resolution. Like me, they watched the bloodshed in the Occupied Territories and Israel with heavy hearts. However, this legislation seems much more to do with the American electoral process than with the crisis in the Middle East. I do not want any of my colleagues to think that by opposing this legislation you oppose Israel. This is not a referendum on the American relationship with Israel.

Viewed objectively, this legislation is simply not in the best interest of the United States, Israel, or the Palestinians, and is damaging to the prospects of peace in the Middle East. It focuses on assigning blame for violence rather than stopping it. It is unfair and biased, and in condemning only one side of this conflict, it jeopardizes the American ability to negotiate peace as a fair and honest broker. It also endangers American lives and economic interests, and places our Arab allies in a precarious position. It is precisely reactionary measures like the one before us that builds up so much ill-will toward America, the only nation with the ability to negotiate peace between Israel and its neighbors. This places Israel in a much more dangerous, isolated position.

Mr. Speaker, it is irresponsible to be debating and voting on this measure as President Clinton, Prime Minister Barak and President Arafat work to end the violence. It will already be difficult enough for Barak and Arafat to calm their people; this resolution throws rhetorical fuel on the fire that is dangerously close to burning out of control.

When the violence abates, the Palestinian Authority, Israel and the world will rely on the United States to get the peace process back on track. We must not let our personal emotions cloud our judgment. It is our duty, and our government's duty, to work as a peace facilitator, not as a judge or partisan.

The Palestinians and Israelis have much to resolve without fighting for the sympathy of the American government and public. The Israelis must realize that the Palestinians have a legitimate right to an independent state and to return to their homes, just as the Palestinians must realize Israel has a right to exist and desires safety and security. Both sides must recognize that the status of Jerusalem is profoundly important to Palestinians and Israelis alike, and that the holy sites are sacred to Jews, Muslims, and Christians. It must be known that the sanctity of life is a shared value. America can help the parties understand their differences and similarities only if all parties trust us.

I do wonder why this legislation, in pinning blame solely on the Palestinians, fails to explain why Palestinians are angry, mention Ariel Sharon's provocation march through al-Haram as-Sharif, or note the tactics employed by Israeli soldiers, who have been criticized by the United Nations and the Israeli press for responding to rocks with bullets. We must not treat this as a black and white issue.

The jobs of President Clinton, Ehud Barak, and Yasser Arafat are not easy. I do not envy them. As Yitzhak Rabin stated moments before he was assassinated, ''Without partners for peace, there can be no peace.'' President Clinton must, despite all that has been said and done, keep Barak and Arafat together as partners in peace. Barak and Arafat must convince highly skeptical publics that the other is a partner. We must not undermine their efforts by passing this resolution. I would urge my colleagues to act responsibility for the sake of the United States, Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the peace process. Vote down this resolution.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), a senior member of our Committee on International Relations.

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, this is clearly the most difficult time for Israel since the 1967 war. It is the most difficult time for the United States in the Middle East since the Gulf War, and perhaps ever. In circumstances like these, one of the great questions is: What are the basics? I think the basics are threefold.

One is that we are a bedrock ally of Israel and always will be. The second is that we have to be a committed facilitator for peace. The third is that we have to be respectful of differing views, philosophies, and religions.

The problem at the moment and the reason fundamentally behind this resolution is that the third aspect, the respect for differing views, is harder in a circumstance where the most progressive proposal for change was placed on the table, turned back, and no counterproposal was put forth. This spring, we were all hopeful that we would see resolution of these extraordinary issues come in an early time frame, based on the fact that Mr. Barak was clearly placing his political life on the line for progressive change, given the fact that the Palestinians and Mr. Arafat seemed in a mood to compromise, and given the fact that an American President had committed himself to be a peace facilitator.

Now the question is, is there any alternative to the peace process? Obviously, there is only one, and that is war. So, while this resolution, I believe, will receive the general support of this body, although with respectful opposition, it is clear that the Congress has to go on very strong record in the context of this resolution of saying that above all, we only want peace, that there is no desire for increased conflict between the Muslim world and the Judeo-Christian traditions, and above all, there is no desire for anything except a fair and reasoned compromise on all sides for the issues of the day, a compromise that can allow people in the region to live in harmony. That is what the Congress desires.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent, so that the debate will not be stifled, that the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) each be granted 5 additional minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Without objection, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) each will have an additional 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) will now have 7½ minutes remaining, and the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) has 10 minutes remaining.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN).

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Does it help us move toward peace in the Middle East for the United States to deny the reality of what is happening today in the Middle East and to turn its back on our staunchest ally, the only democracy in the Middle East? I have to tell Members of this Chamber that we should not, in the earnest hope for peace, turn our backs on Israel. We ought to adopt this resolution and stand in solidarity with the people of Israel.

Let us look at the events. A peace process brought, through our efforts, the head of the Palestinian Authority and the Prime Minister of Israel together to try to work out a settlement. Prime Minister Barak offered the most generous settlement that anyone ever imagined he would; and he was rejected by Arafat, the President of the Palestinian Authority. Chairman Arafat was unresponsive to this proposal and then went home and, either because he did not have the ability to stop it or the conviction to rein it in, permitted the paramilitary forces to engage in mob fury. Chairman Arafat's unresponsiveness to the tremendous proposals put forth indicates that he has very little credibility as a partner for peace.

What else did he do? He opened up the prison doors and let 100 Hamas and Islamic Gihad prisoners out, which is a green light for them to strap bombs on their backs, go into civilian populations and blow up people, to engage in the worst kind of terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, the loss of life on both sides has been tragic, but the refusal of Chairman Arafat to do anything now except to run to international organizations that have always been biased against Israel and urge them to adopt resolutions to internationalize the conflict, to try to point fingers at Israel alone, makes it incumbent on us in the United States, the only superpower in the world, the only country that says to people around the world, follow us into democracy, stick with us and we will stick with you; it is incumbent upon us to stand with Israel and to urge the parties to go back to the table if they can, but only understanding that the United States supports Israel's right to exist and supports them in this terrible conflict.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN).

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I say to my colleagues, America's number one ally in the Middle East, our strategic partner and our dear friend for 52 years, the State of Israel, is today fighting for its very life. Our friend, the State of Israel, who helped us in the Persian Gulf War against Saddam Hussein and in so many other crises in the region and on a day-to-day basis when, as our military is described, America's aircraft carrier in a sea of trouble, is fighting for its very life.

We remember who fought against us in the Persian Gulf War. Chairman Arafat and the Palestinian Authority supported Saddam Hussein against America and its allies. Chairman Arafat rejected an offer for an independent state for the Palestinian people just a few months ago, an offer made by Prime Minister Barak of Israel. He did not like the terms. What did he do? He was supposed to, under the Oslo Accords, continue negotiating. Instead, he walked out, made no counteroffer, left the negotiating table. Days later, violence ensued and lots of innocent people have been killed.

The Palestinian people deserve a leader who will negotiate peace without resorting to violence. Until they get such a leader, the people of the United States need to stand with their friend, the only democracy in the region, America's strategic partner; the only democracy in the region who was traditionally called Satan by the people of the region, along with America, as the Great Satan. We wish peace for all of the peoples of the region. They are all good people; they deserve peace

and democracy. Until the Palestinian Authority gets leaders who are committed to peace and can rein in their extremists, just as Israel needs to rein in their extremists, we will not have peace.

Support America's friend until the other side is willing to come back to the negotiating table and negotiate a peace and not send their children into the street to be killed for CNN's purposes.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 4 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, as we conclude this debate, certainly I have no illusions as to the outcome, just as I believe nobody in this body or in the region or in the world has any illusions about the outcome if, truly, as the previous speaker has said, that Israel is fighting for its very life. That is certainly speaking from emotions, and this is an emotional moment in the region. But who can deny the outcome of gun ships and helicopter gunfire and smart bombs, precision targeting, pinpoint targeting, one of the most well-equipped armies in the world, against the Palestinian people? Who could deny that outcome? Who even thinks that this truly is a war of all wars?

I understand a lot of the accusations that have been made and leveled by my friends and supporters of this resolution, and a lot of that cannot be completely denied. If there is one accurate statement that can be said about this part of the world and the way of life in this region, it is the fact that no side is without their share of the blame, no side is without their share of miscalculations, no side is without their share of inflammatory statements, pandering to their domestic opponents. All of these statements could describe all sides of the fighting in this region.

Mr. Speaker, I truly believe that we in this body have a higher responsibility, not to get involved in internal divisions of any country in the region, not to point fingers, not to take so obvious a side at so obvious an emotional moment; not to speak and take actions that can be perceived in some parts of the world, although not reality, but can be perceived as the law of the Congress when we take actions. We have a responsibility not to take those provocative actions in this body. Granted, we have taken and passed a number of resolutions over the decades, some of which I have supported, that have jumped up at the moment to address what many of us feel is the best sense of peace in the Middle East.

However, we are not secretaries of state in this body. I believe that we have a responsibility, while recognizing what is truly in our hearts, while recognizing our support, as I have today and in the past for our ally, Israel and the region, recognizing our legitimate concerns for the security of its borders; but we have a responsibility. We have a responsibility at this particular time to take action that reflects the thinking in our heads.

As I noted earlier, today we see our armed forces in parts of the Middle East on the highest state of security alert than we have seen in several years. Now, for us to come through with an action of this nature could very well be misinterpreted by some in the region who do not understand that this is merely a resolution and does not carry the force of law, but it is still perceived as an expression of this body that can have devastating effects in the minds of those who in the region have only violence in their heads, who have only suicide missions on their agenda, and who truly have never been for the peace process to begin with.

1700

There are those extremists on all sides in the region who have never been for the peace process. If we are to support this administration and their role as an honest broker and President Clinton's Herculean efforts day in and day out, continuous without fatigue, as he works nonstop to bring the sides to the negotiating table, our role today should be to call for a cessation of violence in a nonpartisan, in a truly objective manner, and urge the parties to come back to the peace process.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as the senior Member of this body said earlier, the United States and we, as Members of Congress, must not abandon our role as an honest broker and take a step that this resolution would do that undermines negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. We must heed the advice of the executive branch that has urged opposition to this resolution, both the National Security Council and the Department of State.

Because although our words may seem removed from the violence that has engulfed the region, they do matter, and people listen. Instead of passing resolutions that condemn one side and further inflame passions, we should urge both parties to return to the negotiating table and to help them find their way back on a path toward peace. This resolution does not do that.

We should offer words of consolation for all the loss of life and injuries. We should call for acts of violence to be halted on all sides in the conflict and call upon all parties to find ways back to the negotiating table no matter how difficult that task may be. We should not be engaging in taking sides and thereby further inflaming the rage and the despair.

Mr. Speaker, I would remind my colleagues of the United Nations Security Council resolution that was adopted on October 7, dealing with the violence in the Middle East. The United States did not veto that. It chose to abstain because it felt that preserving the greater U.S. interests of remaining neutral in the conflict would, in fact, bring us further toward the peace that we all desire.

We also need to keep a number of things in mind. There have been over 130 deaths in this region of the world, almost all of them Palestinians, more than a quarter of them under the age of 18, and almost all of them in an area that was supposed to be under the control of the Palestinian Authority.

The reason for this conflict, Mr. Speaker, is because the Oslo Accords were not implemented. The Israeli Army still controls over 60 percent of the West Bank, a considerable amount of the Gaza Strip. It was clear that, unless we fully implemented the Oslo Accords, there was going to be conflict.

In fact, we ought to recognize as well, if we were to do an evenhanded resolution, that the deliberately provocative act of Ariel Sharon in going to al-Haram al-Sahrif, or otherwise known as the Temple Mount, was a deliberate, conscious act. He was warned against doing that, yet, he took an entourage of more than 1,000 soldiers.

The Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, criticized that visit as extremely provocative. But to many Palestinians, that visit was a show of military might, a blatant reminder of military solutions sought in the past. It was a humiliating message of disrespect to Palestinians and the Arab world. That is not how we bring about peace in the world and particularly in the Middle East.

We as Americans, the rest of the international community, the Israelis, and the Palestinians should know that there is no military solution to these terribly difficult issues that have made the Middle East a region of tension and violence for far too long.

In fact, the presence of Israeli tanks and helicopter gunships in Palestinian territories has only reinforced the despair among Palestinians that they will never be able to live free and independently. That is the source of the violence. That must be addressed.

The Oslo Accords should have been implemented. In fact, since the Oslo Accords 7 years ago, the roads that have been built that have not been opened to Palestinians has further constrained their lives. Parameters are set upon their lives, around their lives that show that there is no hope for the future. It is out of that desperation that we see people sacrificing their lives, that we see people exhibiting real hatred for the situation that they have been put under.

We have a responsibility to address that hatred, to try to find a common goal for the Middle East, one of peace and reconciliation, economic independence. We could only do that if we try to serve, as the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL) said, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) has said, if we try to serve as an honest broker, representing the views of both sides in this conflict.

This resolution accomplishes nothing except to make Members of the Congress look good. That is not our objective. What we should be trying to do is

creating a better life for all people around the world in a fair and honest manner so that we can have a sustainable and just peace.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN).

(Mr. CARDIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the resolution.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS).

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, there have been many calls for the United States to be an honest broker. I share those calls. We have been an honest broker since President Carter brought the parties together at Camp David, but there were two willing parties. We can be an honest broker when both sides are eager to move towards peace, as President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin did.

Arafat's latest contribution to this dialogue was to tell the Prime Minister of Israel to go to hell. It is difficult to be an honest broker under those circumstances. Under those circumstances, our job is to stand up with the only political democracy in the entire Middle East that has gone way beyond anything that anybody in this body thought would be offered the Palestinians and, as a reward, had a walkout by Arafat and the fermenting of an uprising. This resolution must be passed as the overwhelming voice of the conscience.

We all grieve for every single person who lost his life. All lives are of equal value. But the cynical exploitation of little children who are sent into harm's way with financial rewards is not very impressive. It is the most cynical exploitation of the young who do not know any better.

Peace has to come, but in order for peace to come, both parties must be willing to return to the negotiating table with good intentions and the determination that was present at Camp David.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me again say that there is enough blame to go around on all sides in this part of the world. There is a lot of finger pointing today. But it is incumbent upon this body at this crucial time in the region to step back to urge the party to stop the inflammatory statements on both sides, on all sides, and there have been those statements as I referred to earlier, in order to show the bravo, in order to play to the factions within one's own side in that region.

But this body has a higher responsibility not to get involved in that, but, rather, to urge the parties to get back to the negotiating table, as President Clinton and Secretary of State Albright have so excellently tried to do in Egypt and continue to do this very hour. Let us support this administration and their efforts.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, permit me to remind my colleagues that our resolution, H. Con. Res. 426, begins with the statement that the Arab-Israeli conflict must be settled peacefully and through negotiations. But the question is how do we bring about this kind of peaceful negotiations in the Middle East in the current situation?

We have observed in the past few weeks shocking violence in the Middle East. Shall we not take a stand with regard to that violence?

We have a situation where the General Assembly is passing resolutions that our ambassador, the UN Ambassador Holbrooke called, and I quote, unbalanced and unhelpful. That is not the way to bring about peaceful negotiations. We need to focus on the violence, on the parties responsible for the violence. We need to send a firm message to them and send a strong message for peace and of the solidarity of our closest friends in the Middle East, the State of Israel.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution.

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 426. Today, when the U.N. issues resolutions faulting Israel, when the Arab world convenes a summit in order to condemn Israel, is the appropriate time for this House to speak with one voice on the side of our ally. Israel did not start the current violence, the Palestinian Authority did. And while each and every one of us hopes for a peaceful resolution to a conflict that has been ongoing for tens, if not thousands, of years, we must also use this opportunities to express our solidarity with the state and people of Israel. The Resolution before us states unequivocally that the Congress condemns the Palestinian leadership for encouraging the violence and doing nothing to stop it. It urges the Administration to use its veto power to stop biased U.N. resolutions from going into effect, and it encourages the parties to settle their grievances through negotiations.

The time has come to stand with our friend Israel and to stand up against those who would lay the blame for the recent unfortunate events at her feet. Indeed, in many respects the Resolution does not go far enough. The American people continue to contribute to the Palestinian Authority in the form of foreign aid, and I would suggest that that aid be suspended pending a Presidential determination that the Palestinian Authority is doing all it can to stop the violence. But until that more significant step is taken, I welcome the House's passage today of H. Con. Res. 426. It sends an important message from the members of this body that while we stand on the side of peace, more importantly we stand on the side of Israel. I urge my colleagues to support the Resolution.

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for House Concurrent Resolution 426. I commend the distinguished Chairman of the International Relations committee, Mr. GILMAN, along with 152 cosponsors, for bringing this important and timely resolution to the floor. I watched the events unfold during the past several weeks with extreme concern. I watched as Chairman Arafat remained silent while Palestinians and Israelis alike, were being killed in Ramallah and Nablus. It was not simply the silence that was so troubling. Mr. Arafat took active steps to fuel the fire by meeting with representatives of Hamas and Hizbollah. These groups have made it their mission to undermine the peace process and destroy the state of Israel. Dealing with such groups calls into question the goals of Chairman Arafat.

I was encouraged by the Palestinian and Israeli commitment to meet at Sharm-El-Sheikh to work out the terms of a cease fire agreement. Unfortunately, Chairman Arafat, once again, failed to fulfill his obligations to the peace process. The agreement called for an immediate and public denunciation of the violence. The statement made by Mr. Arafat to the Palestinian public to that effect was ambiguous and unenthusiastic. It fell far short of what was agreed to in Egypt.

As a result, the violence has persisted and has cast serious doubt over achieving peace in the region. In addition the United Nations General Assembly recently passed a one-sided resolution condemning the use of force by the Israeli security forces. At this crucial time, it is essential that the State of Israel knows that we will stand alongside her in her quest for peace. To that end, I am a proud cosponsor of this resolution.

House Concurrent Resolution 426 expresses Congressional solidarity with the state and people of Israel. In addition, it condemns the Palestinian leadership not only for inciting further violence, but for failing to take the necessary steps to prevent it.

Mr. Arafat, the United States, Israel and the Palestinian people have all recognized you as the leader of the Palestinian Authority. It is time for you to step up and lead. Tell your people, there will be no intifada, only salaam. If you cannot wholeheartedly support the peace process, the United States can no longer support you. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this process. Let there be no ambiguity as to position the United States will take in this process.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I will be voting for H. Con. Res. 426 to express support for the resolution of Arab-Israeli differences by peaceful negotiation and to condemn the violence that has engulfed the region. In doing so, I am mindful of the special relationship our country has and must maintain with our ally, Israel, and of the heroic efforts of our President to bring about a ceasefire and to restart negotiations. I also commend Prime Minister Barak for the path-breaking proposals he put forward during the negotiations at Camp David. It is now even clearer than it was then how unfortunate, indeed tragic, it is that the parties were not able to refine and build upon those proposals to achieve final agreement.

The resolution before us, however, falls considerably short of the kind of expression that might best contribute to stopping the violence and resuming negotiations. I therefore support it with great ambivalence. Some have suggested that the tone and content of this resolution is justified by the one-sidedness of the anti-Israeli resolutions adopted at the United Nations. I disagree. This House should not be primarily reactive, nor should we see our main purpose as the affixing of blame. We should

not second-guess the difficult decision the administration took, to abstain from using its veto in the Security Council in order to maintain its leverage in bringing the conflicting parties together. I am aware of the particular responsibility Chairman Arafat has to condemn and contain the violence and can only hope that he has the ability as well as the will to do so. But it is critically important that our government be absolutely clear and absolutely fair in demanding that both sides refrain from reckless provocation, end the cycle of violence, reject extremist elements who stoke the violence and block the path to accommodation, and earnestly attempt to restart the negotiations that alone can resolve this conflict.

I regret, Mr. Speaker, that the resolution before us falls so far short. But in its last sentence it captures a sentiment which I believe all of us share, calling on ''all parties involved in the Middle East conflict to make all possible efforts to reinvigorate the peace process in order to prevent further senseless loss of life by all sides.'' May we as a body and as a government find ways to tirelessly advance this goal in the critical days and weeks ahead.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution and urge my colleagues to vote for this important statement on the ongoing events in the Middle East. The events in the Middle East have revealed to all Americans the asymmetrical relationship that has existed in the peace process. I have been a strong supporter of that process, and was willing to lend it my full support so long as it was clear that both sides were equally committed to fair and compromise peace. We see now that the peace process was not mutual.

Israel, a staunch and loyal friend that shares our democratic values was seeking honest compromise. At Camp David, Prime Minister Barak made compromises far bolder and more sweeping than any Israeli prime minister had dared to go. Under his proposal, 90% of the West Bank and 92% of the Palestinian population would have been ruled by a Palestinian government. Jerusalem's Holy Places would have been placed under joint administration and a part of the city made the capital of an independent Palestine. Mr. Speaker, to these sweeping proposals, Chairman Arafat offered not even counter-proposals.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution is a balanced and appropriate response to the events in the Middle East. It calls for a restoration of the peace. It does not relinquish hope that compromise might yet be achieved. Yet it strongly and rightly condemns the Palestine Authority and Mr. Arafat for their incitement of the current round of violence and for their failure to put a stop to it. It properly calls upon Mr. Arafat to renounce violence, and it recognizes that Israel remains a friend of the United States. In a similar vein, it calls for the United States ''to insure that the Security Council does not again adopt unbalanced resolutions addressing the uncontrolled violence in the areas controlled by the Palestine Authority.''

Mr. Speaker, we should adopt this resolution and we should make clear that as between a democratic Israel and an autocratic Palestine Authority there is no choice. I therefore urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply concerned by the outbreak of violence and the abdication of responsibility by Palestinian authorities for restoring the peace. We must make clear that peace may be achieved only through peaceful and negotiated means.

I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 426, which expresses solidarity with the state and the people of Israel, condemns Palestinian authorities for encouraging violence and urges them to act to restore calm, states that peace in the region may be achieved only through negotiations, and calls for a U.S. Veto of biased U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Should Arafat continue to pursue violence instead of negotiations, or should he declare a Palestinian state absent an agreement, we should cut off all assistance to the Palestinian Authority.

I hope that there will be a return to the peace process. However, if Arafat rejects a negotiated solution and continues supporting an armed uprising, we must be clear. We will stand with Israel.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 426. This important resolution expresses the solidarity of the Congress with the sate and people of Israel at this time of crisis. As a cosponsor of the resolution, I urge its passage by the House. Only a few short months ago at Camp David, the Israeli Government demonstrated the willingness to make sweeping concessions. The world would not have dreamed of how far Israel was willing to go. Not 10 years ago, 1 year ago, or even 6 months ago. It was the Palestinian leadership that rejected compromise and showed that it was not interested in peace. Not only did they reject Barak's offer, but they did not even counter-offer in response.

The violent Palestinian riots we are witnessing result directly from the fact that Yasir Arafat did not prepare his people for peace. As Barak was restraining the expectations—preparing the Israeli people for compromise—Arafat was pumping up the Palestinian demands—preparing them for conflict. We must today say that Arafat is not a partner for peace.

Although Israel has today taken a time out from the peace process, it remains as willing as ever to make peace with its neighbors. However, Israel must have a real partner. One that does not engage in incitement to violence; one that does not look the other way when their people are destroying ancient shrines, such as Joseph's tomb in Nablus; one that does not allow their people to beat innocent Israelis to death, as happened recently in Ramallah; and one that does everything in its power to set the conditions for peace.

The underlying basis of negotiations was the recognition of the PLO by Israel in exchange for the renunciation of violence by the PLO and Chairman Arafat. In his September 9, 1993 letter to the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Chairman Arafat ''renounced the use of terrorism and other acts of violence'' and pledged to ''prevent violence and discipline violators.''

Unless the Palestinian leader calls on his people to halt their fanatical, hostile public violence and directs his security services to maintain order—as he promised—the Palestinians will be in violation of not only the text of the peace agreements, but the basic understanding which underlay the process. Furthermore, as the Palestinian rock and molotov cocktail throwers, and gun-men continue to rage, Israel will be within its rights as a sovereign nation to take whatever actions it needs to protect its people and frontiers.

Now, there is a moral imperative to stand our ground. Israel is not only our closest friend and ally in the Middle East, they are in the right. Israel has demonstrated its willingness to make peace and is now under attack by thousands of violent rioters. It is time for Congress to express its solidarity with the people of Israel and, stand with them in the days to come. The resolution on the floor of the House today does just that.

Furthermore, we must condemn the Palestinian leadership for its cowardly encouragement of mass riots and for doing so little to halt the hysterical rampagers. We must also demand that Arafat and his lieutenants use their security services to restrain unnecessary acts of violence, show respect for all holy sites, and settle grievances only through negotiations.

In the days to come, I expect new challenges to U.S. policy. In particular, we must be prepared to firmly and without hesitation reject a unilateral declaration of Palestinian statehood. Such a question can only be settled at the peace table. We must pass the bill which would deny any assistance to the Palestinians if they unilaterally declare statehood.

We must also consider other actions, including, once again, putting the PLO on the list of groups responsible for acts of terrorism. For the Palestinians to engage in violent riots today after they rejected what all reasonable observers thought was a far-reaching and statesman-like offer from Prime Minister Barak, is only leading the world to see that Yassir Arafat and his PLO cohorts prefer conflict to negotiation, and taking land through violence and coercion rather than agreeing on exchanges at the bargaining table.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the chairman and ranking minority member of the House International Relations Committee who wrote this excellent resolution. I urge my colleagues to give it their strong support.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, once again the situation in the Middle East has turned from efforts to resolve the conflict peacefully to a new wave of violence that undermines the basis for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.

Mr. Speaker, there is no one more supportive of the Middle East Peace Process than I am. I also support efforts to assist the Palestinian peoples, and to facilitate exchanges and other programs to promote reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

The current wave of violence, however, is simply unacceptable. It is undermining the very basis for peace, the notion that Palestinians and Israelis can trust each other and live together. In 1993, a key principle of reconciliation was that the Palestinian leadership renounced violence as a means of achieving their political aims. The last few weeks have proven that the Palestinians have not lived up to this commitment.

At Camp David, the Government of Israel and Prime Minister Barak made sweeping proposals that moved the two sides closer than they have ever been in reaching a historic agreement ending the Israeli Palestinian violence. Instead of making a counterproposal to this important move, the Palestinian side has allowed and even promoted, violence on a huge scale.

I can only conclude that the Palestinians have decided that they need to resort to violence in order to create more pressure on

Israel to make further concessions. Even after an international summit prescribed a way of winding this violence down, the Palestinians continue their violent actions. These actions are spilling over to other countries both inside and outside the region, and have the potential to become increasingly widespread.

I therefore believe that it is important that this resolution move forward at this time. Under this resolution, Congress expresses its solidarity with the state and people of Israel, condemns the Palestinian leadership for doing so little to stop the violence, and calls upon the leadership to refrain from exhortations to violence, to stop all violence, to show respect for all holy sites and to settle all grievances through negotiations.

It also commends the current and past administrations for their efforts to find Middle East peace, urges the Clinton administration to stop future unbalanced resolutions, and calls on all parties involved in the Middle East conflict to make all possible efforts to reinvigorate the peace process to prevent further senseless loss of life by all sides.

Mr. Speaker, despite my disappointment and outrage at this developing violence, I remain convinced that there is no alternative to a peaceful settlement between Israel, the Palestinians and its Arab neighbors. The sooner that all parties in the region not only recognize that Israel is here to stay, but also truly internalize that reality and negotiate on that basis, real peace cannot be achieved.

Now, all the parties in the region need to step back and to try to find a way to end this violence and return to the negotiating table. We need to pass this resolution today to ensure that the U.S. Congress sends a clear message of its support for Israel during this crisis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 426.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2000

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1452) to modernize the requirements under the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 and to establish a balanced consensus process for the development, revision, and interpretation of Federal construction and safety standards for manufactured homes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1452

SEC. 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the ''American Homeownership and Economic Opportunity Act of 2000''.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.
Sec. 2. Findings and purpose.

TITLE I—REMOVAL OF BARRIERS TO HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Sec. 101. Short title.
Sec. 102. Grants for regulatory barrier removal strategies.
Sec. 103. Regulatory barriers clearinghouse.

TITLE II—HOMEOWNERSHIP FOR WORKING FAMILIES

Sec. 201. Reduced downpayment requirements for loans for teachers, public safety officers, and other uniformed municipal employees.
Sec. 202. Home equity conversion mortgages.
Sec. 203. Law enforcement officer homeownership pilot program.
Sec. 204. Assistance for self-help housing providers.

TITLE III—SECTION 8 HOMEOWNERSHIP OPTION

Sec. 301. Downpayment assistance.
Sec. 302. Pilot program for homeownership assistance for disabled families.
Sec. 303. Funding for pilot programs.

TITLE IV—PRIVATE MORTGAGE INSURANCE CANCELLATION AND TERMINATION

Sec. 401. Short title.
Sec. 402. Changes in amortization schedule.
Sec. 403. Deletion of ambiguous references to residential mortgages.
Sec. 404. Cancellation rights after cancellation date.
Sec. 405. Clarification of cancellation and termination issues and lender paid mortgage insurance disclosure requirements.
Sec. 406. Definitions.

TITLE V—NATIVE AMERICAN HOMEOWNERSHIP

Subtitle A—Native American Housing

Sec. 501. Lands title report commission.
Sec. 502. Loan guarantees.
Sec. 503. Native American housing assistance.

Subtitle B—Native Hawaiian Housing

Sec. 511. Short title.
Sec. 512. Findings.
Sec. 513. Housing assistance.
Sec. 514. Loan guarantees.

TITLE VI—MANUFACTURED HOUSING IMPROVEMENT

Sec. 601. Short title; references.
Sec. 602. Findings and purposes.
Sec. 603. Definitions.
Sec. 604. Federal manufactured home construction and safety standards.
Sec. 605. Abolishment of National Manufactured Home Advisory Council; manufactured home installation.
Sec. 606. Public information.
Sec. 607. Research, testing, development, and training.
Sec. 608. Prohibited acts.
Sec. 609. Fees.
Sec. 610. Dispute resolution.
Sec. 611. Elimination of annual reporting requirement.
Sec. 612. Effective date.
Sec. 613. Savings provisions.

TITLE VII—RURAL HOUSING HOMEOWNERSHIP

Sec. 701. Guarantees for refinancing of rural housing loans.
Sec. 702. Promissory note requirement under housing repair loan program.
Sec. 703. Limited partnership eligibility for farm labor housing loans.
Sec. 704. Project accounting records and practices.
Sec. 705. Definition of rural area.
Sec. 706. Operating assistance for migrant farmworkers projects.
Sec. 707. Multifamily rental housing loan guarantee program.
Sec. 708. Enforcement provisions.
Sec. 709. Amendments to title 18 of United States Code.

TITLE VIII—HOUSING FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED FAMILIES

Sec. 801. Short title.
Sec. 802. Regulations.
Sec. 803. Effective date.

Subtitle A—Refinancing for Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly

Sec. 811. Prepayment and refinancing.

Subtitle B—Authorization of Appropriations for Supportive Housing for the Elderly and Persons With Disabilities

Sec. 821. Supportive housing for elderly persons.
Sec. 822. Supportive housing for persons with disabilities.
Sec. 823. Service coordinators and congregate services for elderly and disabled housing.

Subtitle C—Expanding Housing Opportunities for the Elderly and Persons With Disabilities

PART 1—HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY

Sec. 831. Eligibility of for-profit limited partnerships.
Sec. 832. Mixed funding sources.
Sec. 833. Authority to acquire structures.
Sec. 834. Use of project reserves.
Sec. 835. Commercial activities.

PART 2—HOUSING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Sec. 841. Eligibility of for-profit limited partnerships.
Sec. 842. Mixed funding sources.
Sec. 843. Tenant-based assistance.
Sec. 844. Use of project reserves.
Sec. 845. Commercial activities.

PART 3—OTHER PROVISIONS

Sec. 851. Service coordinators.

Subtitle D—Preservation of Affordable Housing Stock

Sec. 861. Section 236 assistance.

Subtitle E—Mortgage Insurance for Health Care Facilities

Sec. 871. Rehabilitation of existing hospitals, nursing homes, and other facilities.
Sec. 872. New integrated service facilities.
Sec. 873. Hospitals and hospital-based integrated service facilities.

TITLE IX—OTHER RELATED HOUSING PROVISIONS

Sec. 901. Extension of loan term for manufactured home lots.
Sec. 902. Use of section 8 vouchers for opt-outs.
Sec. 903. Maximum payment standard for enhanced vouchers.
Sec. 904. Use of section 8 assistance by ''grand-families'' to rent dwelling units in assisted projects.

TITLE X—BANKING AND HOUSING AGENCY REPORTS

Sec. 1001. Short title.
Sec. 1002. Amendments to the Federal Reserve Act.
Sec. 1003. Preservation of certain reporting requirements.
Sec. 1004. Coordination of reporting requirements.
Sec. 1005. Elimination of certain reporting requirements.

TITLE XI—NUMISMATIC COINS

Sec. 1101. Short title.