

News from Senator

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The following speech was given by Senate Republican Bob Dole to the National Jewish Coalition.

U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS: EXPLORING THE STRATEGIC RELATIONSHIP

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU TODAY ABOUT AMERICA'S BEST FRIEND IN THE MIDDLE EAST -- ONE OF OUR BEST AND MOST LOYAL FRIENDS ANYWHERE -- THE STATE OF ISRAEL.

NO DOUBT ALL THOSE WHO HAVE SPOKEN BEFORE ME TODAY HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR OWN STRONG SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL, AND OUTLINED SOME OF THEIR IDEAS ON HOW TO STRENGTHEN U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS. BUT I WANT TO TALK ABOUT ISRAEL FROM A LITTLE DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE.

AND I WANT TO PROPOSE A NEW INITIATIVE: TO BEGIN EXPLORING WITH ISRAEL IN A MORE COMPREHENSIVE AND CONCRETE WAY -- AND IN COOPERATION WITH OUR NATO AND ASIAN ALLIES -- A NEW LEVEL OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP; A PARTNERSHIP IN THE FIRST INSTANCE AIMED AT STABILIZING AND SHORING UP NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.

SHARED VALUES, SHARED EXPERIENCES

U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS ARE UNIQUE, THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. THERE IS A PERSONAL, ALMOST EMOTIONAL ELEMENT TO THE WAY THAT MOST AMERICANS LOOK AT ISRAEL. ISRAEL IS THE "CHAMPION" FIGHTING FOR RIGHT, THAT ALL AMERICANS ADMIRE. IT IS THE "UNDERDOG" FIGHTING AGAINST GREAT ODDS, THAT ALL AMERICANS LOVE.

WHEN I HEAR ISRAELIS TALK, AS I HAVE SO OFTEN, ABOUT THEIR LOVE OF COUNTRY AND THEIR WILLINGNESS TO RISK THEIR OWN LIVES TO DEFEND THEIR FREEDOMS -- I KNOW WHAT THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT. I'VE BEEN THERE. MANY IN THIS ROOM, AND MILLIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, HAVE BEEN THERE, TOO.

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COMMON INTERESTS, COMMON GOALS

ON A GEOPOLITICAL LEVEL, TOO, U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS ARE SPECIAL. WE SHARE WITH ISRAEL NOT JUST THE TRANSIENT INTERESTS ON WHICH SO MANY OTHER RELATIONSHIPS ARE BUILT; BUT A NEAR IDENTITY OF FUNDAMENTAL GOALS -- FOR OUR TWO COUNTRIES, AND FOR THE WORLD.

IT IS NOT AN ACCIDENT THAT WE ACCOMPLISHED OUR FIRST BILATERAL FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH ISRAEL -- AN AGREEMENT I WAS PROUD TO SHEPHERD THROUGH THE SENATE, WHEN I WAS MAJORITY LEADER. IT HAPPENED BECAUSE WE HAVE THE KIND OF RELATIONSHIP THAT ALLOWED US TO WORK OUR A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL DEAL.

WHEN THE CHIPS ARE DOWN, IT IS ISRAEL WE USUALLY TURN TO FIRST, FOR HELP AND SUPPORT. AND I DON'T HAVE TO TELL THIS AUDIENCE THAT ISRAEL HAS ALWAYS BEEN THERE.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

YET, BECAUSE OF THE VERY INTIMACY OF U.S.-ISRAELI RELATIONS, THERE IS A COMMON MISPERCEPTION THAT, SINCE DAY ONE, OUR TWO COUNTRIES HAVE HAD A CAREFULLY WORKED OUT PLAN FOR COOPERATION ON ALL GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES -- REGIONAL AND GLOBAL.

IN FACT, IT WASN'T UNTIL THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION TOOK OFFICE THAT WE BEGAN TO COORDINATE IN A SYSTEMATIC WAY ON GLOBAL STRATEGIC QUESTIONS. THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION WORKED OUT THE FIRST MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON STRATEGIC COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL, SIGNED IN 1981. IT WORKED OUT THE PROCEDURES FOR THE JOINT U.S.-ISRAEL MILITARY GROUP TO OVERSEE DEFENSE COOPERATION, PUT IN EFFECT IN 1983. AS A RESULT, WE DO COOPERATE WITH ISRAEL ON MATTERS SUCH AS JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES AND THE PREPOSITIONING OF SUPPLIES FOR POTENTIAL MILITARY OPERATIONS.

BUT THE PROCESS SET IN TRAIN BY THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS TO BE PURSUED AND ACCELERATED. THERE IS MORE WE CAN DO TO STRENGTHEN OUR ALLIANCE; AND MORE BOTH NATIONS CAN DERIVE FROM EXPANDED STRATEGIC COOPERATION. THIS IS NOT JUST RHETORIC; IT'S NOT PIE-IN-THE SKY. THERE ARE THINGS WE CAN START DOING NOW; AND THINGS WE CAN START THINKING ABOUT FOR THE FUTURE. LET ME OFFER SOME EXAMPLES.

ISRAEL AND NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK

I WOULD START WITH THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND SURROUNDING AREAS. THE SOVIET THREAT THERE IS OMINOUS. IN THE FORM OF DANGEROUS CLIENT STATES LIKE LIBYA AND SYRIA. IN THE FORM OF A DRAMATICALLY INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE OVER THE PAST DECADE. AND THE RECENT SOVIET OFFER OF ESCORTS FOR KUWAITI SHIPPING REFLECTS THE AGGRESSIVENESS WITH WHICH THE SOVIETS ARE MOVING IN THE WATERS OF THAT REGION. AND IN THE FORM OF AN ACTIVE DIPLOMACY, REACHING OUT TO OUR OLD FRIENDS, INCLUDING GREECE.

MEANWHILE, NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK IS SHAKEN BY CONTINUING TENSIONS BETWEEN TURKEY AND GREECE. OUR BASE RIGHTS IN THOSE COUNTRIES AND IN SPAIN -- THROUGH WHICH WE GAIN ACCESS TO THE MEDITERRANEAN -- ARE UNDER DIRECT CHALLENGE. AND FRIENDLY NATIONS LIKE EGYPT AND TUNISIA ARE BESET BY PERIODIC POLITICAL TENSION AND INSTABILITY.

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IT BOILS DOWN TO THIS: THERE IS NO ABSOLUTELY FIRM AND RELIABLE ANCHOR, WITHIN THE NATO STRUCTURE, FOR WESTERN DEFENSES IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. THIS IS THE UNDERBELLY OF NATO -- AND RIGHT NOW, A DANGEROUSLY SOFT UNDERBELLY.

ISRAEL AS A FIRM ANCHOR

ISN'T IT TIME WE EXPLORE MORE FULLY WITH ISRAEL ITS POTENTIAL AND WILLINGNESS TO HELP FILL THE BIG STRATEGIC GAP, THE "RELIABILITY GAP," THAT NOW EXISTS ON NATO'S SOUTHERN FLANK?

WE NEED TO DO TWO THINGS, IN PARTICULAR. FIRST, WE HAVE TO ESTABLISH A MORE EFFECTIVE WAY TO ENSURE STRATEGIC COORDINATION BETWEEN NATO AND ISRAEL. RIGHT NOW, ISRAEL ENGAGES IN BILATERAL COOPERATION WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF NATO STATES, BUT HAS NO RELATIONSHIP AT ALL WITH NATO.

THE MECHANISM FOR COORDINATION NEED NOT -- AND SHOULD NOT -- BE HIGHLY STRUCTURED. IN FACT, THE LESS VISIBLE IT IS, THE BETTER. BUT IT MUST PERMIT REGULAR, ORGANIZED COMMUNICATION.

THE OTHER MAJOR THING THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE IS A SYSTEMATIC EXPLORATION OF ISRAEL'S POTENTIAL AND WILLINGNESS TO PROVIDE SECURE SITES, LOGISTICS AND OTHER RESOURCES AND SUPPORT TO PLANNED OR POTENTIAL AMERICAN OR ALLIANCE OPERATIONS. RIGHT NOW, WE EXPECT ISRAEL TO RESPOND POSITIVELY, WHEN WE ASK FOR HELP, AD HOC. BUT WE HAVE NOT LOCKED IN THAT SUPPORT -- BY A COMPREHENSIVE, CLEAR UNDERSTANDING IN ADVANCE.

NOW LET ME STRESS: WE NEED TO AGREE; BUT WE MAY NOT NEED -- OR WANT -- A WRITTEN AGREEMENT. THAT IS A QUESTION THAT CAN BE EXPLORED. THE POINT IS: LET'S GET THE PROCESS GOING.

AND IT STRIKES ME THAT EVEN THE HINT OF SUCH TALKS WITH ISRAEL COULD HAVE A VERY SALUTARY EFFECT IN TURKEY AND GREECE -- NATIONS WHICH ARE CERTAINLY NOT UNMINDFUL THAT THE BASES GIVE THEM POLITICAL LEVERAGE OVER US. WE SHOULD REMIND THEM THAT WE HAVE SOME CARDS TO PLAY, TOO, IN THAT PART OF THE WORLD.

IN SUM, LET'S QUIT LOOKING AT THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AS BEING DIVIDED INTO A "NATO AREA" AND A "MIDDLE EAST" AREA. IT IS ONE AREA -- LARGE, VITAL AND, NOW, VULNERABLE. AND ISRAEL IS THE ONE PLAYER THERE WITH THE NEAR TERM POTENTIAL TO CLOSE THE WINDOW OF VULNERABILITY THAT EXISTS.

NOR IS THAT THE ONLY OPPORTUNITY FOR CLOSER U.S.-ISRAELI STRATEGIC COOPERATION.

ISRAEL'S ROLE IN SDI

ISRAEL CAN BECOME A KEY PARTNER IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIC DEFENSE INITIATIVE. ITS ABILITY TO CARRY ON HIGHLY FOCUSED, HIGHLY EFFICIENT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IS WORLD CLASS, IN EVERY SENSE OF THE WORD.

ISRAEL IS ALREADY WORKING HARD ON R&D FOR AN ANTI-TACTICAL BALLISTIC MISSILE SYSTEM, THE ATBM. THE TECHNOLOGIES INVOLVED FIT DIRECTLY INTO OUR OWN SDI RESEARCH PROGRAM; AN ATBM SYSTEM ITSELF COULD BE INTEGRATED AS A PHASE IN A MORE COMPREHENSIVE U.S. SDI NETWORK. AND THE REPORTS I GET ON THE QUALITY AND PACE OF THE ISRAELI R&D EFFORT SUGGEST THAT ISRAEL COULD BE READY FOR ITS OWN DEPLOYMENT DECISION FAR EARLIER THAN ANYONE HAS IMAGINED UNTIL NOW.

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ISRAEL AND WESTERN EUROPE: THE THREAT IS SIMILAR
KEEP THIS IN MIND, TOO: THE BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT THAT
ISRAEL FACES IS VERY SIMILAR TO THE THREAT THAT NATO FACES IN
EUROPE. MANY OF THE IDENTICAL SOVIET SYSTEMS POINTED AT ISRAEL
FROM SYRIA ARE ALSO AIMED AT NATO, FROM LAUNCH SITES IN EASTERN
EUROPE.

SHOULD WE SUCCEED IN ACHIEVING AN ACCEPTABLE INF AGREEMENT
WITH THE SOVIETS -- ONE WHICH LED TO THE ELIMINATION OF ALL OR
NEARLY ALL INF SYSTEMS WORLDWIDE -- ISRAEL'S BALLISTIC MISSILE
DEFENSE PROBLEM WOULD LOOK EVEN MORE LIKE WESTERN EUROPE'S. AND
ISRAEL'S EFFORT TO RESOLVE ITS OWN PROBLEM WOULD BE EVEN MORE
DIRECTLY APPLICABLE TO NATO'S DEFENSE NEEDS.

TODAY, ISRAELI FIRMS ARE BIDDING ON SDI PROJECTS, INCLUDING
IN THE ATBM AREA. THOSE ISRAELI PROPOSALS SHOULD BE GIVEN A
FAIR SHOT -- NOT JUST BECAUSE ISRAEL IS OUR FRIEND; BUT BECAUSE
ISRAELI SUPPORT FOR SDI WOULD BE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION TO
AMERICA'S, AND TO THE FREE WORLD'S, DEFENSES.

WEAPONRY R&D AND PRODUCTION

AND WE SHOULD ALSO BEGIN IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM OF
INTEGRATING ISRAELI R&D AND PRODUCTION OF WEAPONRY, ACROSS THE
BOARD, INTO THE U.S. AND NATO EFFORT. ISRAEL OPERATES IN A
DEFENSE ENVIRONMENT -- AN "ENVELOPE" OF OPERATIONS -- THAT
DUPLICATES THE TACTICAL ENVIRONMENT OF WESTERN EUROPE. ISRAEL'S
DIRECT THREAT, LIKE NATO'S, IS JUST ACROSS THE NEXT LAND
BORDER. IT'S MILITARY HARDWARE PRIORITY, LIKE NATO'S, IS
RAPID-RESPONSE WEAPONRY. AND, TRAGICALLY, ISRAEL -- UNLIKE NATO
-- HAS ALREADY HAD TO TEST ITS EQUIPMENT AGAINST THE BEST AND
MOST SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY THE SOVIETS CAN PRODUCED.

SO ISRAEL KNOWS THE SCORE; IT IS BATTLE-TESTED; AND IT'S
HOME-PRODUCED WEAPONRY CAN BE JUST AS EFFECTIVE IN ARMING NATO
AS IT HAS BEEN IN STRIKING BACK AGAINST ARAB ATTACK.

AN EFFORT TO EXPLORE CLOSER WEAPONS R&D AND PRODUCTION
COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL WAS MANDATED IN LAST YEAR'S DEFENSE
AUTHORIZATION BILL. THE ADMINISTRATION HAS STARTED LOOKING AT
THE POTENTIAL. BUT WE NEED TO MOVE FROM THE STAGE OF
"THINKING-ABOUT" AND THEORIZING TO THE STAGE OF PLANNING AND
IMPLEMENTATION.

ANY MONEY WE INVEST IN SETTING UP COOPERATIVE PROJECTS TODAY
REPRESENTS A GREAT INVESTMENT IN HIGHER IMPACT DEFENSE BUDGETS
IN THE FUTURE. ISN'T IT TIME TO MAKE THAT KIND OF INVESTMENT?
ISN'T IT TIME TO SET UP A MECHANISM FOR ISRAEL, THE U.S. AND
HOPE NATO TO EXPLORE THIS ISSUE REALISTICALLY AND IN DETAIL --
AND WITH AN EYE TOWARD THE NEEDS NOT ONLY OF THE MOMENT, BUT
ALSO OF THE FUTURE?

COOPERATION AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

FINALLY, ISN'T IT TIME THAT WE EXPANDED OUR COOPERATION EVEN
FURTHER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM? NOT JUST
U.S.-ISRAELI BILATERAL COOPERATION; BUT THE MORE EFFECTIVE
INTEGRATION OF ISRAEL INTO A BROADER COOPERATIVE EFFORT,
REACHING FROM THE NATO ALLIANCE TO JAPAN.

ALL OF OUR NATIONS FACE A TERRORIST THREAT. ALL OF US CALL
IT AN INTERNATIONAL PROBLEM, AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT IT CAN BE
CONTAINED ONLY BY AN INTERNATIONAL EFFORT. ALL OF US ESPOUSE
THE SAME FUNDAMENTAL POLICIES -- NO REWARDS FOR TERRORISM; NO
NEGOTIATIONS WITH TERRORISTS.

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BUT, WHEN PUSH COMES TO SHOVE, HOW OFTEN DO WE REALLY ACT IN CONCERT? HOW OFTEN DO WE EVEN KEEP EACH OTHER APPRISED OF OUR PLANS AND PROGRAMS?

THE VIENNA SUMMIT AND ISRAEL

I THINK THE PLACE TO START IS THE UPCOMING VIENNA SUMMIT. I HOPE THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL USE THIS OCCASION TO URGE ALL THE SUMMIT NATIONS INTO A CLOSER COOPERATION -- STARTING WITH CLOSER AND MORE OPEN COMMUNICATIONS -- TO DEAL WITH TERRORISM.

OUR FIRST PROPOSAL OUGHT TO BE URGENT NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT AN AGREED STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES, PROCEDURES AND MECHANISMS FOR GREATER ALLIED COMMUNICATION AND COOPERATION ON THIS TERRIBLE PROBLEM.

AND WE HAVE TO BRING ISRAEL DIRECTLY INTO THAT LOOP. ISRAEL IS THE FRONT LINE. IT HAS SHOWN BY EXAMPLE THAT IT HAS SOME OF THE ANSWERS TO TERRORISM. IT HAS DEMONSTRATED THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF POLITICAL WILL, SOPHISTICATED TECHNIQUES AND GOOD INTELLIGENCE. WITHOUT CLOSE COOPERATION WITH ISRAEL -- WITHOUT LEARNING SOME OF THE LESSONS ISRAEL CAN TEACH -- WE CANNOT ADEQUATELY DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM.

CLOSE THE PLO OFFICES -- NOW

AND LET ME SAY SOMETHING THAT, UNTIL YESTERDAY, I NEVER IMAGINED I WOULD BE SAYING ON TERRORISM. WE CAN EVEN TAKE A LESSON IN DEALING WITH TERRORISM FROM THE ACTIONS OF EGYPT, MOROCCO AND JORDAN.

YESTERDAY'S HEADLINES TELL THE TALE: "EGYPT SHUTS DOWN PLO OFFICES;" "MOROCCO ORDERS CLOSURE OF ALL PLO OFFICES;" "JORDANIANS CLOSE ARAFAT'S OFFICES."

IT'S HIGH TIME THE UNITED STATES FOLLOWED THAT EXAMPLE.

IT'S HIGH TIME THAT WE ENDED THE FARCE OF ALLOWING THE PLO TO OPERATE OPENLY IN WASHINGTON -- IN THE SHADOW OF THE WHITE HOUSE; AND IN NEW YORK -- UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS.

IT'S HIGH TIME BOTH OFFICES WERE SHUT DOWN -- TIGHT. AND ALL THE FOREIGN PLO AGENTS HERE WERE SENT HOME -- FOR GOOD.

TIME FOR CONGRESS TO BOOT OUT THE PLO

THE PLO IS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION. ARAFAT IS A TERRORIST. ABU ABBAS, AND ABU NIDAL, AND ALL THE REST CAN TRY TO HIDE IN THE SHADOWS. WE KNOW WHO THEY ALL ARE. WE KNOW WHAT THEY STAND FOR. AND WE WANT NO PART OF THEM, OR THEIR ORGANIZATION, IN THE UNITED STATES.

FOR THAT REASON, I WILL INTRODUCE LEGISLATION TO CLOSE DOWN THE PLO OFFICES IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK. AND TO SEE THAT THEY DON'T REOPEN AGAIN, AS LONG AS THE PLO ESPOUSES TERRORISM.

EXPLORING THE POSSIBILITIES

AND LET ME CLOSE WITH THIS THOUGHT. I HAVE OFFERED JUST A FEW IDEAS. BUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF PRODUCTIVE COOPERATION ARE ALMOST LIMITLESS.

THERE IS NO REASON THOSE POSSIBILITIES CANNOT BE REALIZED. THERE IS NO REASON TO WAIT ANY LONGER IN BRINGING THEM TO REALITY.

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