

of this home and renting portions of it to tenants to make ends meet.

Since early 2014, the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority of New Jersey wants to take this home and give it to an unknown entity. They don't even have a plan to redevelop this home. They just want his property. That is not right, Mr. Speaker. That is not the American way of life. That is not the American Government that I am going to allow to abuse this man's precious home.

The solution is something that I have put together. The Defense of Property Rights Act is a piece of legislation that has come out of the Property Rights Caucus, working with my fellow Members from Maine to Alabama, to California, to stand up for private properties in America.

I introduced the legislation in January. The Defense of Property Rights Act would stand with people like Charlie and say: What America and the Big Government mentality of today is doing is wrong, and there are Members in Washington, D.C. who are joining us in the fight to say no more. We will force through that legislation accountability. We will make sure that government thinks about what it is doing before it destroys Charlie's American Dream and the Charlies across the country. Because, if it can happen to Charlie, Mr. Speaker, it can happen to anyone.

On my watch in Congress, I will do whatever I can to stand with those fellow American citizens and say: We are not going to let this happen.

#### HONORING FRED SIMON

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

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend who has not only left his mark on a nationally recognized Omaha business, but also on the city itself. Fred Simon joined the family business Omaha Steaks back in 1959, helping to make it the household name and success story it is today.

But the memory of Fred Simon goes beyond the bottom line. Through his love of the arts, he spent many years helping propel the city of Omaha into a world-class community. Art lovers in Omaha have long recognized the role Fred played in elevating the city's cultural stature. It has been said that he knew that great cities need great art. With that goal in mind, Fred helped bring a full-time professional opera company to Omaha, and he didn't stop there.

Serving as Opera Omaha's board president, financially backing and attending the opera for more than four decades, Fred once said that he was sensitive to the meaning of words and the power of music. Fred, you will certainly be missed on many levels. Omaha thanks you for a life that has indeed been well lived.

#### JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF IRANIAN TERRORISM ACT

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

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3457, the Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act. Iran currently owes \$43.5 billion to victims of state-sponsored terrorism. Hundreds of Americans have personally felt the impact of Iranian terrorism. In the last 30 years, Americans studying abroad, teaching or traveling through the Middle East have been taken hostage, killed in suicide bombings and gunned down by members of the Islamic jihad.

The damages owed have been previously awarded by U.S. courts under Federal law, and the judgments remain unsatisfied by the Islamic Republic of Iran. Under the President's Iran deal, sanctions on Iran will be lifted, and an estimated \$150 billion in assets will be released to them, and not one single cent will be used to pay the debts owed to the victims of Iranian-sponsored terrorism.

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H.R. 3457 holds Iran accountable to the victims of its terrorism by ensuring that not one cent of sanction relief goes to Iran until the victims are paid.

I am a proud cosponsor of Mr. MEHMAN's legislation, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

#### UNWAVERING BOND WITH ISRAEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this morning, the United Nations will take yet another action that only serves to further undermine the prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestinians and underscores the lengths to which the United Nations and many of its member states will go in order to wrongly isolate and delegitimize the democratic Jewish State of Israel.

By raising the Palestinian flag for the first time ever at the U.N., that body is allowing Palestinians to continue with their scheme to achieve unilateral statehood without having to honor their obligations to reach a peaceful settlement through direct negotiations with Israel.

While addressing the U.N. General Assembly this week, President Obama had an opportunity to denounce this latest stunt and press for the United Nations to abandon its course of action and return to the principles of its own diplomatic agreements with regard to resolving the peace process; yet, as usual, the President remained silent. That silence speaks volumes about the administration's policy toward Israel, our closest friend and ally, and it will surely only serve to embolden Abu Mazen. Today, Abu Mazen will address

the U.N. General Assembly, and his speech will be nothing more than political theater.

In his speech later today, Abu Mazen will surely continue his ploy to achieve unilateral statehood recognition from sympathetic states and U.N. entities that are dominated by anti-Israel bias, like the Human Rights Council. What a misnomer. And, of course, he will blame Israel for not being able to achieve peace, when it is Abu Mazen who repeatedly has rebuffed overtures from Israel Prime Minister Netanyahu to return to the table to discuss a mutually agreeable resolution.

Mr. Speaker, we have seen over the past several years—a sight unseemly and unbecoming—the administration publicly admonish and insult our ally Israel and its leaders, applying a false moral equivalency between Israel and the Palestinians; yet when it comes to Abu Mazen's intransigence or Palestinian incitement, the Obama administration remains reserved in its condemnation, if it feigns the appearance of disapproval at all.

For peace, Abu Mazen must recognize Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state, must renounce the use of violence and put an end to the repeated rocket attacks and acts of terror, and must sit down with Israel to be an earnest partner for peace.

Abu Mazen, who is currently in his 10th year of a 5-year term as the leader of the Palestinian Authority, is only interested in self-preservation and self-interest. The onus lies with Abu Mazen and the Palestinian Authority to live up to their obligations and previous diplomatic agreements. If and when it doesn't—for surely, I know that they won't—the U.S. must be ready to cut off financial assistance to the Palestinians.

We must see that our assistance is used as leverage to ensure that the Palestinians honor their commitments and negotiate a peaceful two-state solution directly with Israel without any preconditions. We must also veto any attempts by the Palestinians to bring another resolution to the U.N. Security Council to advance their illegal unilateral statehood scheme and must make Abu Mazen pay for the consequences of these destructive actions.

The Obama administration will offer platitudes, and the administration officials will say that no other President has done more for Israel's security. But I caution that it isn't what the administration or the President says regarding Israel; it is what they don't say that we should also be paying attention to. That is why the President's silence on Israel and the Palestinians at the U.N. General Assembly this week is all too telling, and that is why it is up to us in Congress to do what we can to support Israel, to support the Jewish state's right to exist and its right to defend herself, and to use the leverage we have.

Ladies and gentlemen, nearly \$10 billion in U.S. taxpayer dollars, your

money, is being sent to the U.N. We must use that leverage at the U.N. to hold those entities accountable and to fight back this fraudulent unilateral statehood scheme and these efforts to delegitimize Israel.

We need to make every effort we can to signal to the world that our commitment is an unbreakable bond between the U.S. and the democratic Jewish state and that that bond is unwavering.

#### ARE WE IN OR OUT IN ELIMINATING ISIS?

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on September 10, 2014, President Obama announced that the United States would “degrade and ultimately destroy” ISIS. ISIS has obviously not gotten the memo. This terrorist group keeps moving across the Middle East, killing those who stand in its way by raping, pillaging, and murdering those who disagree with them. ISIS controls half of Syria and large parts of Iraq. Civilized society is losing to these barbarians.

Despite the U.S. spending billions on a counterterrorism strategy, the terrorist group’s numbers have not decreased. In fact, ISIS has grown in size, with affiliates all over the world, including Indonesia, Yemen, Egypt, and even Libya.

A \$3 billion U.S. airstrike campaign has been plagued with little measurable successful results. From the very beginning, military officials warned that airstrikes alone that relied on virtually no human intelligence or on-the-ground intelligence would not be successful. Without good intelligence, the number of airstrikes the U.S. has carried out have been few, and the results are uncertain.

Also, ISIS fighters killed by our airstrikes are just replaced by other jihadists. Our intelligence estimates that ISIS’ numbers are the same as they were when our airstrikes began.

In addition, the administration’s \$500 million train and equip program has proved to be a failure by anyone’s measure. In July, officials reported they had identified 7,000 planned participants but only trained 60 of these mercenaries. Later that month, 54 fighters crossed into Syria to fight ISIS forces that numbered in the tens of thousands. Of those 54 mercenaries, virtually all were killed, captured, or scattered when attacked. We are now down to four or five U.S.-trained mercenaries, according to General Lloyd Austin of CENTCOM.

Despite this failed policy, just last week, we sent a second group of 70 U.S.-trained mercenaries into Syria. Just 1 day later, reports suggested that one of the officers defected and surrendered his arms to al Qaeda’s Syrian affiliate, and several truckloads of weapons were allegedly traded to the terrorist group al-Nusra for safe passage.

It is time to abandon this failed train and equip program.

The reality is just as bleak on the on-line battlefield. ISIS has 30,000 to 40,000 social media accounts. It uses the Internet to spread propaganda, raise money, and find recruits as far away as Washington State.

In 2011, the administration promised a strategy to combat terrorist use of social media. Four years later, we still haven’t seen that plan. No plan, no degrading ISIS, no defeating ISIS.

The intel given to the administration has also been doctored to cover up how badly the war against ISIS is going. Meanwhile, thousands of people are fleeing the Middle East—flooding Europe and demanding entry into other Western nations because of the ISIS carnage and the chaos in Syria as well.

In the face of our failure to destroy ISIS, we should be focusing on what we can do better and how we can improve our strategy without using U.S. ground troops.

ISIS’ advances in Syria translate into more direct threats to our national security and interests, both abroad and at home. ISIS wants to destroy the United States and everything we stand for. ISIS fears no one—certainly not the United States—so it continues to murder in the name of its radical jihad. It has already killed innocent Americans.

We need a strategy that protects American people from this radical Islamic threat. So what is the plan? Let the Russians defeat ISIS and prop up the butcher of Syria, Assad, and let him remain in power? Who knows. The current U.S. plan seems to be like the war in Vietnam: don’t win, don’t lose.

The American people need to know if the U.S. is in or out in the fight against ISIS. If it is in the national security interest of the United States to degrade and defeat them, we need to define the enemy and defeat them.

And that is just the way it is.

#### SITUATION IN SYRIA

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, I am not generally in the habit of agreeing with my friend from Texas, but I do thank him for posing some really challenging questions about our activities in Syria.

I think it is fair to say that the situation in Syria has gotten worse, not better. And only now that the chaos in Syria results in the flow of hundreds of thousands of people into Europe and into surrounding and delicately constructed countries, only now that we are having a conversation about how many Syrian refugees we will take in the United States are we beginning to take notice of the moral tragedy that has been with Syria for many, many years.

The civil war in Syria has resulted in the deaths of more than 300,000 people. It has created 4 million refugees and

displaced more than 6.5 million people into places like Jordan and Turkey—and now, in Europe and elsewhere around the world.

Sadly, it appears that the efforts that we have made, which my friend from Texas referred to, have been ineffectual, to put it mildly, and the situation grows worse. We watch now the Russians introducing military equipment into Syria, something that can only result in more violence, more death, and more refugees. We see, sadly—and I have watched this closely from my perch on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence—ISIS gaining in strength, not losing strength.

There are lots of conversations to be had about U.S. efforts to train and equip the so-called Syrian moderates. There are conversations to be had about how we deal with Russian influence in the area. But something we must focus on now, and something that is the subject of a letter that I and 54 of my colleagues have sent to the President of the United States, is that the only real solution in Syria, a solution that should be implemented today, is for the international community, all of the players that have a stake and influence in Syria, to come together today to begin the process of working out an international agreement, the terms of which will undoubtedly be uncomfortable for us, but an agreement that will bring an end to the civil war. This agreement should provide for the exit of Bashar al-Assad. He has lost all credibility as a global leader, but he remains there.

Apart from ending the humanitarian and moral crisis in Syria, that conference would allow us to finally align behind an objective that I believe is shared by pretty much everybody in the region, which is the destruction of ISIS.

Until we take this step of coming together around a table that, yes, will involve some unsavory characters, that, yes, will not lead to an agreement that we regard as perfect, until we do that, we will simply be managing chaos. And maybe we will manage chaos well, but it will still be managing chaos: hundreds of thousands of refugees and the destabilization that that will cause, more weaponry being introduced, more U.S. taxpayer dollars expended.

We can do that. That is what we have been doing. We can do it for more months and more years. Or we can do the obvious thing, which is get around a table—and I do call on the President of the United States to show American leadership in this—and say we don’t leave the room until this moral tragedy is stopped.

This is what it would mean to be a leader in the world. We can bomb. We can send military equipment. We do that a lot. Real leadership will involve saying we will come together with people we like and people we don’t to solve this problem.

I call on this House to assist me and others in the effort to make sure that