



*News From*

**DAVE WELDON**

**Florida's 15th District**

*-- Serving Brevard, Indian River, Osceola, and Polk Counties*

For Immediate Release:  
September 16, 2003

Contact: Pamela Groover, (202) 225-3671  
[pamela.groover@mail.house.gov](mailto:pamela.groover@mail.house.gov)

**House Floor Statement by Rep. Dave Weldon, M.D.  
Regarding U.S. Support of Israel**

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in this House to address the tragic situation in the Middle East and the failed peace process. It is obvious to all that the continued dispatching of these so called suicide or homicide bombers into Israeli civilian targets like buses and restaurants is intended to prevent any peaceful resolution of the Palestinian problem.

For any peace process to work, both parties involved must want peace. The Palestinian Authority and Mr. Arafat have demonstrated that they do not want to end and they are unwilling and incapable of preventing this ongoing violence against Israeli civilians.

The repeated call by Mr. Arafat for "martyrs by the millions," reiterated by him again just last week, should be a stark reminder to us all that we cannot work with him or the beliefs he represents. There can be no real peace when these are the sentiments of the man's heart. Let us no longer delude ourselves.

Ariel Sharon's primary responsibility and the primary responsibility of the Israeli government above and beyond everything else, is to maintain the safety and security of the Israeli people. While the opinions of European ministers and the US Government and its State Department are important, they are not more important than the lives of Israeli women and children.

Now is the time to acknowledge that Oslo has been a terrible failure, and the Roadmap is not working. Hundreds of Israelis are dead and buried as a testimony to that fact. Many more are left to face a lifetime of painful disability.

I feel very strongly that the Israeli government should be supported in doing whatever is necessary to protect its people. If this includes the expelling of Arafat, so be it. If this includes completing the fence, so be it. Whatever is necessary to defend itself and protect its people.

Our State Department was recently quoted as saying that expelling Arafat will not be helpful. I strongly disagree. It may prove to be very helpful. It might end these attacks on Israeli civilians, and what is more, it could be very helpful to the Palestinians themselves.

Since Arafat's return in '93 the Palestinian economy has shrunk by 70% while at the same time the Israeli economy has doubled. There is widespread corruption and no freedom of speech in the Palestinian controlled territories. Any Palestinian who openly criticizes Arafat or The Authority's policies is killed. Removing this man and the evil corrupt regime around him might be the best thing for the peace process.

I know that I do not stand alone in these sentiments and that a majority of this House, The Senate, and the American people will support Israel in this. I have been doing a great deal of traveling around the state of Florida, and I know the majority of the people of Florida feel as I do. And the people of Florida are little different than the rest of America.

Certainly the American people expect our leaders to do whatever it takes to protect our people. If the American people were being subjected to these kinds of ongoing indiscriminate killings of women and children, the public would be crying out for the total obliteration of the perpetrators.

Witness what is happening today. In response to the attacks on America of 9/11 we have waged all out war, first attacking Afghanistan, then Iraq. Did America rise up and say we need to negotiate with Bin Laden and develop a "peace process."  
No!

The American people understand that there is no negotiating with bloodthirsty murderers; the only road to peace and safety is the obliteration of Al Qaeda and the regimes that aid it. President Bush said:

*"Every nation has a choice to make. In this conflict there is no neutral ground. If any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocents, they have become outlaws and murderers themselves. And they will take that lonely path at their own peril."*

I could not agree more. If this is the standard for America, why should it not be the same for another country? To deny Israel the right to do what it takes to defend itself is to deny Israel the right to exist and to turn our back on an ally and over 50 years of American policy.

We must allow Israel to pursue the same goals for its people, as we want for ourselves, the right to live in freedom, peace and prosperity. We must stop defending and supporting this brutal and dysfunctional Palestinian Authority and its leader Arafat.

I agree with all those who say we may never end this war on terror until a solution to the Palestinian problem is found. However, negotiating with vicious murderers who seek the destruction of Israel is no solution. It only worsens the problem. Let us give Ariel Sharon and the Israeli government the freedom to do what is right, to defend themselves and protect their people.