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Thank you for the opportunity to be with you this evening.

It is good to be among such close friends.

I have known Sheldon and Miriam for a very long time indeed, and it is wonderful to be with you both tonight. I treasure our friendship and I salute you both for your well deserved award and recognition for all the hard work you do to keep America safe, free, and prosperous.

I also wish to salute the work of the Republican Jewish Coalition. The work that you do to champion free enterprise and America as a force for good in the world is more vital than ever.

As we gather this evening, America is in the midst of an economic crisis.

More Americans are without jobs, and for longer periods of time, than at any time in our history since the Great Depression.

I am running for President to lead a movement of Americans who will insist on changing Washington so we can renew America.

To do this, we must insist on dramatic and bold changes in Washington, repeal policies that are killing jobs and stifling growth, and enact policies that will create jobs and prosperity.

There is no more important task for the next president.

As someone who has been in public life for nearly forty years, I know full well the rigors of campaigning for public office.

In fact, I have had some recent reminders.

But I will endure the challenges and I will carry the message of American renewal to every part of this great land, no matter what it takes.

A vitally important part of American renewal is renewing American leadership around the world as a force for a lasting peace, especially in the Middle East.

This is why I was so happy to accept your invitation to be here tonight.

Earlier this week, Jewish people all over the world celebrated the Feast of Shavuot, or Pentecost, commemorating the revelation of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

And today is actually Pentecost Sunday in the Christian tradition.

It was on this Feast of Shavuot 44 years ago, in June of 1967, a mere six days after the Old City of Jerusalem had been reunited in the Six Day War, that for the first time in almost 2,000 years, Jewish people were once again able to visit the Western Wall and walk the streets of the Old City as citizens of a sovereign Jewish nation.

Hours before dawn that day, thousands upon thousands of Jews gathered at the Zion gate to await entry into the Old City.

At 4 a.m., the crowds were finally allowed to stream into east Jerusalem -- the first time Jews had been allowed to carry out a pilgrimage to the Western Wall, as members of a Jewish nation, celebrating a Jewish festival -- since the pilgrimages to the Temple 2,000 years earlier.

As the sun rose over the Old City, a total of more than 200,000 Jews made their way through the city streets to a site that today remains the heart of a people, a religion, and a nation.

Each year the Festival is celebrated in a similar fashion, by a pedestrian pilgrimage through the streets of Jerusalem to the Western Wall.

It is a pilgrimage of which generations of Jews could only dream, and signifies the unbroken connection between the identity of the Jewish people and the land of Israel that has existed not for mere decades, but for thousands of years.

During this last week, today's generation of Jews made a similar pilgrimage through the streets of Jerusalem, knowing that the freedom that allows them to visit their holiest sites is more endangered at this moment in history than at any time since that Shavuot morning four and a half decades ago.

Indeed, both Israel and America are at a dangerous crossroads in which the survival of Israel and the safety of the United States both hang in the balance.

While the United States and her allies have won important victories in the war on terrorism, it is impossible to look at the totality of the world ten years after 9/11 and conclude that we are on the winning path, or that the world is a safer place.

Year after year the forces of terrorism become stronger and the claims of terrorists become more acceptable to our European allies and more powerful in the United Nations.

Year after year the Iranian dictatorship, with its openly stated desire to annihilate Israel and defeat the United States moves closer to having nuclear means to do so.

Year after year Hamas grows stronger in Gaza and Hezbollah grows stronger in Lebanon.

Today the greatest obstacle toward achieving a real and lasting peace is not the strength of the enemy or the unwillingness of Israel to make great sacrifices for the sake of peace, but an inability on the part of the Obama Administration and certain other world leaders to tell the truth about terrorism, be honest about the publicly stated goals of our common enemies, and devise policies appropriate to an honest accounting of reality.

Recall that during Congressional testimony last year, Attorney General Holder was repeatedly asked and yet could not bring himself to say that the ideology of radical Islamism plays a role in motivating Islamic terrorists to carry out their attacks.

The report issued in the aftermath of the Fort Hood attack, in which Major Nidal Hassan, who carried around business cards that said "warrior of Allah" and shouted Allahu Akbar while opening fire on unarmed men and women, did not once mention radical Islamism.

In an eerily similar incident at the Frankfurt airport earlier this year, a terrorist opened fire, yelling Allahu Akbar and killing two people.

Yet the State Department spokesman, when asked if it was a terrorist attack, responded by asking: "was the shooting of congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords a terrorist attack?"

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This moral confusion, which cannot see the difference between the isolated, albeit depraved, actions of a madman, and an attack that fits into a carefully defined ideology of radical Islamist terrorism, is sadly typical of this administration's elevation of political correctness above common sense.

The Obama administration's policy towards Israel has been a victim of this same dangerous confusion.

In his recent State Department speech, President Obama rightly stated that Israel cannot be expected to negotiate with a terrorist organization that denies its right to exist. But he then went on in the same speech to pressure Israel to do exactly that.

President Obama wants Israel to enter into negotiations with a Palestinian Authority that is now in league with the terrorist organization Hamas.

The president said that applying this pressure on Israel was not the politically savvy thing for him to do, and that the safe thing to do in an election year is nothing.

He is essentially telling us that he is doing the brave thing by pressuring Israel to negotiate with terrorists who want to destroy it.

President Obama and his State Department should recall some basic facts.

Hamas was founded as a terrorist organization dedicated to the destruction of Israel. Its charter openly calls for Israel's destruction and instructs its followers to kill Jews wherever they find them.

Also consider these recent statements:

Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas administration in the Gaza Strip commenting on May 2, 2011: QUOTE "The Jews are the most despicable and contemptible nation to crawl upon the face of the Earth."

Two days later Hamas Foreign Liaisons Chief Osama Hamdan said in an interview that QUOTE "I think that we are entering the phase of the liberation of Palestine. When we talk about the liberation of Palestine, we are talking about the notion of Return: the return of the refugees to their homeland, and the return of the Israelis to the countries from which they came."

Then on May 11, Hamas MP and Cleric Yunis Al-Astal said QUOTE "In just a few years, all the Zionists and the settlers will realize that their arrival in Palestine was for the purpose of the great massacre, by means of which Allah wants to relieve humanity of their evil."

That was just one month ago.

Hamas goes well beyond words in its effort to destroy Israel. In 2010 over 200 missiles were fired into Israel from Gaza.

No country can be expected to conduct peace negotiations with a terrorist organization dedicated to its destruction, or with a Palestinian governmental authority that joins forces with such a terrorist organization.

Because Hamas has not changed, an Israeli peace with Hamas is impossible.

Twenty years of hopes for the modern peace process cannot change this fundamental reality.

It also means that entering into peace negotiations with any organization that includes Hamas is a fool's errand. It is something that no friend of Israel should ever ask Israel to do.

And let me add, I certainly hope this administration doesn't resort to the meaningless exercise of trying to artificially distinguish between the military and political wings of Hamas as a way of justifying pressure on Israel to negotiate with the latter.

We understand full well that money is fungible, but ideology is constant.

Hamas remains unequivocal in its aims to destroy Israel, and it itself makes no such distinction -- an approach that plays a dangerous game with the survival of Israel.

In his recent speeches, President Obama also called for Israel to accept the 1967 lines as the beginning of peace negotiations. He went to great lengths to have us all believe that what he said at the State Department and later at AIPAC was no different than what other American presidents have declared as official policy.

Unfortunately, that's just not true. President Obama has in fact called for a remarkable shift in U.S. policy regarding the peace process. He wants Israel to accept the indefensible lines of 1967 as the starting point of negotiations.

Accepting such a proposal would be a suicidal step for Israel.

Fortunately for Israel, the President's plan for Israel to accept the 1967 lines is an absolute non-starter with the American people.

Like Israel, we are committed to seeing a peace agreement that protects Jerusalem as the undivided capital of the Jewish state. After all, it has only been under Jewish authority that religious freedom, including access to holy sites, for people of all faiths -- Christian, Jewish, and Muslim -- has been protected.

Meanwhile, we must readily see the President's policies for what they are: the dangerous accommodation of Middle East dictators, and worse, the accommodation of terrorist groups like Hamas, whose ideology virulently opposes freedom, compromise, and peace, and who view such accommodation as a weakening of U.S. resolve and commitment to Israel's security.

President Obama's policies represent a sharp break from the post World War II American political consensus of providing unwavering support to the State of Israel, all at the risk of Israel's destruction and increasing danger to the United States.

The decision to adopt a policy of accommodation, using the political objectives and code-words of those who wish to drive Israel into the sea, affirms the administration's radicalism in its headlong flight from the legacy of U.S. Presidents from Truman to Bush -- and is leading Israel and the Western democracies toward ever increasing danger.

Nowhere will this danger be shown more clearly this coming September at the United Nations General Assembly.

The Palestinians have said that they will request U.N. recognition of Palestinian statehood based upon the 1967 borders.

This action would violate every standing agreement the Palestinians have with Israel, including the Oslo Accords, to negotiate a final border agreement.

Such a recognition would take place totally apart from any negotiation with Israel, and without the Palestinians renouncing violence or acknowledging Israel's statehood.

While President Obama rightly says that the United States will vote against this unilateral action, some nations - including even some in Europe - are

sending the signal that they may indeed vote for it.

A vote by civilized nations in the General Assembly to unilaterally recognize a Palestinian state would strengthen terrorists' belief that their commitment to violence and their unwavering rejection of Israel's right to exist has begun to produce their desired goals.

President Obama and the State Department must be clear in their discussions with our Western allies, to remember the mistakes of history and to reject this unilateral action that would reward terrorist groups who refuse to abide by the basic principles of human dignity and freedom.

Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada, had it right when he said:

"When Israel, the only country in the world whose very existence is under attack, is consistently and conspicuously singled out for condemnation, I believe we are morally obligated to take a stand."

President Obama's focus on Israel as the obstacle to peace is particularly disturbing considering the existence of a true threat to the peace of the world, and that is the threat from Iran.

The Iranian dictatorship is steadily and methodically developing nuclear weapons. All the world's diplomatic meetings and four rounds of U.N. sanctions have not slowed the Iranian dictatorship down a single day.

The Iranian leader, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has been very open and explicit about his desire to wipe Israel off the map. When you realize that only three Iranian nuclear weapons deployed against Israel would bring about the equivalent of a second Holocaust, you have to take his words seriously.

Ahmadinejad is also threatening the United States. He has called for a "world without America." A goal he said is attainable.

The Iranian threat is hardly new. Mark Bowden in his book "Guests of the Ayatollah" described the 1979 seizure of the U.S. embassy and hostage taking as the first shots in Iran's war against America.

For decades, America and Israel have shared a common enemy embodied in this poisonous ideology that threatens our safety, freedom, and peace.

It is the same ideology that murdered Israeli athletes in 1972, that took American hostages in Iran for 444 days; that murdered Marines in their barracks in 1983; that bombed the World Trade Center in 1993, Riyadh in 1995, the Khobar towers in 1996, the U.S. embassies in 1998, and the USS Cole in 2000.

Many of the terrorist groups that have carried out these and many other attacks have been supported directly by the nation of Iran.

Today Iran is watching whether the United States keeps its promises with its ally Israel and how we deal with Iran's proxies, Hamas and Hezbollah.

The Iranian regime will also be watching how America and our allies treat Israel at the U.N. General Assembly this September.

Just earlier this week, Iran's nuclear chief announced their intention to triple their production of highly enriched uranium and to continue to install more advanced centrifuges for that purpose.

Iran has also experimented with polonium and nuclear triggers, which have only one purpose— to detonate a nuclear bomb.

What then should America do in the face of these facts?

We first need to acknowledge that 20 years of trying to negotiate peace with evil regimes and organizations dedicated to the destruction of Israel — and in many cases our own destruction — has been a failure, and the time has come to clearly and decisively take the offensive against them.

This begins with a firm and consistent commitment by the United States — in the Reagan tradition — to speak plainly and truthfully about the nature of our enemies.

Next, our policies must reflect the fact that there is no moral equivalency between terrorist regimes and a legitimate self-governing country that abides by the rule of law.

A foreign policy based upon this moral distinction is increasingly critical during a moment many have termed the "Arab Spring."

The uprisings in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya are evidence of the fact that there are indeed millions of peace-loving Arabs who resent the brutal oppression of their leaders' dictatorships and long for a future of freedom and peace. These uprisings are tremendous opportunities for the advancement of freedom and democracy in the Middle East.

At the same time these developments are fraught with danger, and bring with them the possibility that radical Islamist factions will capitalize on the upheaval and take control.

Our commitment to condemning and confronting terrorism in the world must be matched by an equal commitment to affirm the efforts of oppressed Arab citizens who are taking extraordinary risks to seek true peace, freedom, and democracy.

Both in the cases of the Iranian and Syrian popular uprisings, the Obama Administration's glaring silence has undermined the strength of our commitment to freedom and solidarity with those peoples who are yearning to breathe free.

And every terrorist group in the world takes note of that silence — whether Hamas, Hezbollah, or terrorist regimes like Iran.

There are nine specific policy proposals I would like to leave with you tonight.

1. As a demonstration of this new resolve, the United States should move the American embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. Israel has every right as a sovereign free nation to choose its own capitol and we should respect that choice. As President, on my first day in office, I would issue an executive order directing the U.S. embassy in Israel to be moved to Jerusalem as provided for in the legislation I introduced in Congress in 1995.
2. The United States must also refuse to participate in any talks involving terrorist organizations and cut off all direct and indirect aid to terrorists and their front groups. This must include the Palestinian Authority, so long as it includes Hamas and continues to produce propaganda lionizing suicide bombers and promoting the destruction of Israel. We should also call on other nations who are ostensibly committed to true peace between Israel and the Palestinians to do the same.
3. The United States should also explicitly reject the concept of a "right of return" for Palestinian refugees. The so-called right of return is a historically impossible demand that would be a demographic disaster and mean the end of a Jewish State of Israel. We are for a right to prosperity, a right to freedom, a right to the rule of law, and a right to private property. We must be totally opposed to a right of return.

This means that the Palestinian refugee problem must be resolved outside the borders of Israel by the Palestinian government after Palestinian statehood has been achieved.

4. The United Nations camp system must be replaced with a system of earned income and property rights to restore dignity and hope to every Palestinian. The current, failed camp system of socialism and unearned charity has been a disaster. It has led to poverty, vast unemployment, deep bitterness and a society which produces entrepreneurs of terrorism rather than entrepreneurs of wealth creation.

More money in the form of international aid will not solve this problem. A new approach will bring a better standard of living and greater freedom and security for Palestinians than all the terrorist efforts and dictatorships have been able to achieve.

5. We must also re-establish the United States Information Agency as a robustly funded worldwide anti-terrorism and pro-freedom communications and advocacy system. The USIA fought for our side in the war of ideas during the Cold War and helped us win.

In 1999, this agency was dismantled because we thought the war of ideas was over. We discovered on 9/11 that it was not.

Israel is reminded of this on almost a daily basis.

Earlier this year, terrorists of the Al Aqsa Martyr's Brigade broke into the West Bank home of Udi and Ruth Fogel in Itamar.

The terrorists stabbed this husband and wife to death.

They murdered three of their children.

Not even the youngest of these children, a three-month-old baby girl named Hadas, was spared.

They slit the child's throat, and severed her head from her body.

In Gaza, crowds handed out candy and celebrated.

This sickening display of jubilation at the gruesome murder of a three-month-old child is the result of decades upon decades of brainwashing Palestinian children. It is an example of the kind of barbaric acts of terror that must be rejected by all Palestinians in any peace negotiation with Israel.

The USIA helped America win the Cold War and it can help us win the war against evil terrorist organizations and dictatorships. But to do this we must ensure that the USIA once again has independent board of governors reporting to the President and coordinating with the State Department but not controlled by the diplomats.

Never again should a three-month-old baby be killed without the entire world being repulsed and joining together in condemning such terrorists and their supporters.

6. We must aggressively confront the growing threat of a nuclear-armed Iran. The existence of the Iranian regime pursuing nuclear weapons and financing terrorism across the globe is a primary threat to the security of the United States, Israel and our allies in the world. The United States must lead the world in an all-out effort to replace the Iranian dictatorship using the diplomatic, economic, information, political, and covert tools President Reagan used to defeat and dismantle the Soviet Empire.

7. The United States must also establish an aggressive new strategy of taking back the United Nations from the forces of terrorism and dictatorship. Totally discrediting and, if possible, stopping the Durban 3 conference on racism later this year – the previous two sessions of which have been used as a vehicle for anti-Semitism - should be an early goal of this new worldwide campaign.

Furthermore, the United States must be prepared to suspend all funding to the United Nations if the General Assembly moves to recognize a Palestinian state under the control of Hamas.

8. All of this will require a restructured State Department, a new level of training and management for Ambassadors, a new promotion system, and a profound shift in the culture of the Foreign Service. The quickest way to change the culture at the State Department is to inject new blood into the system. We must engage in fundamental reform of the overly slow and bureaucratic security clearance system to raise the level of applicants to the Foreign Service.

Change on this scale will be bitterly fought by the old guard at State and their media allies.

It will require a strong, experienced, and knowledgeable Secretary of State and a deeply committed team around him.

My campaign website newt.org contains a detailed document outlining the other changes that will be necessary to transform the State Department's historic aversion to moral clarity about the difference between terrorism and civilization, which have weakened both the United States and Israel.

9. Finally, the United States must establish an American energy policy designed to strengthen our national economy and weaken our opponents in the Middle East by keeping in the United States the hundreds of billions of dollars we now spend on foreign oil supplies.

We must dramatically increase American energy supplies so we can lower the marginal cost of energy worldwide. Nothing will do more to alter the strategic balance of power away from dictatorships and state sponsors of terror than a successful American energy policy.

In closing, if it were possible to say a word directly to the Israeli people, it would be this: we believe together with you that peace is possible, and that peace ultimately will come to Israel.

The never-ending tendency to Blame Israel First is just another variation of Blame America First, and it springs from the same weakness.

It is far easier to ignore an unpleasant reality and try instead to impose your will on somebody you think you can control, rather than deal with the unpleasant reality that you are too timid to confront.

If Israel disarmed today, there would be no Israel tomorrow. But if Iran, Hamas, Hezbollah and other terrorist groups disarmed today, then tomorrow we would have peace in the Middle East.

While our challenge today will likely not meet with such a simple solution, our commitment to Israel's protection remains as staunch as it has been from the moment of Israel's birth.

And I would also say this to the brave people of Israel: Never, ever underestimate the hold that Israel has on the American heart.

The American people have always believed in Israel, and we believe in Israel still.

Together, we will renew our mutual commitment to freedom and justice, and we will work to achieve a peace in which war and bloodshed and violence are no longer a common feature of life for you and your children.

On June 30, 1936, when Abyssinia was being invaded by Italy, Emperor Haile Selassie appealed to the League of Nations Assembly for assistance. He said: "It is us today. It will be you tomorrow."

We know that if the forces of terrorism could eliminate Israel today, they would turn toward America tomorrow.

That is why we must reverse the Obama Administration's dangerous policies of incoherence and accommodation and implement instead a foreign policy that is clear about the evil that we face and committed to the actions necessary to overcome it.

America is still the last best hope of mankind on earth.

I believe like Ronald Reagan did that the goal of U.S. foreign policy must be the promotion of peace. But that it must be a real peace where freedom can flourish and justice can prevail, not a false peace that emboldens terrorists, tyrants and murderous ideologies to extend their evil throughout the world.

It is toward this possibility of real peace that America must commit itself.

No other nation in the history of the world has been so inexorably tied to the fate of freedom throughout the world.

The time has come to reaffirm America's commitment to freedom and the rule of law; to stand firmly and courageously against terrorism and evil organizations and dictatorships. It is time to stand firmly with our friends.

Together those of us who believe in freedom will defeat tyranny for the fourth time in a century.

Together we will earn for our children and grandchildren a freer and safer world.

This is our duty. This is our generation's rendezvous with destiny.

Thank you.

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