

10-12-00

ISRAEL SUPPORTERS RALLY

Israel Supporters Rally

New York, New York

October 12, 2000

We are here today to say to the world that we stand firmly behind Israel and we're called together to express our outrage at the waves of rioting and unprovoked violence in the Middle East.

I also want to express my shock and sorrow at the attack on the United States' ship in Yemen. My heart goes out to the families of the brave sailors who have lost their lives.

This appears to be a terrorist attack although no final determination has been made. And we must say clearly that terrorism of any kind must not be tolerated. It is not an acceptable negotiating tool and the United States stands with those who stand against terrorism.

And the United States will hold those accountable who have committed this act of terrorism. But the person we must call on to be responsible today to end the violence is Chairman Arafat. (applause)

I renew my call for him to do everything in his power to end the violence and to enter into a cease-fire. In the last few days, three Israeli soldiers have been kidnapped in Lebanon and I have met with the families of Israeli MIAs and I know what that suffering must be like.

Two soldiers have been lynched and murdered in a Palestinian police station and more are missing. The Tomb of Joseph has been desecrated, prayer books have been burned and a holy site lies in ashes.

All people of faith around the world are deeply offended by this desecration. But instead of acting to curb the violence, Palestinian police officers joined in the rioting and Palestinian television stokes the fire with calls to action and a glorified Intifada.

I reject the United Nations' Security Council's response to the events of the past few weeks. Their one-sided condemnation of Israel is shameful and ignores the reality of the situation in

the Middle East.

Israel must always be able to protect its citizens and to put an end to violence. I know what Israel's security needs are, having been there, and I understand the need never to compromise the security of Israel.

And we call upon the Palestinians and Chairman Arafat to recognize their responsibility and to comply with the terms of Oslo and the Wye Accords which means eliminating all terrorism operating from the West Bank and Gaza.

I also would say that I know this is the season of politics but it is also a time of great peril. I believe it is imperative that we stand surely with Israel and we stand in support of the President who continues his effort to end the violence in the Middle East. (applause)