S. 1756. An act to enhance the ability of the National Laboratories to meet Department of Energy missions, and for other purposes.

S. 2686. An act to amend chapter 36 of title 39, United States Code, to modify rates relating to reduced rate mail matter, and for other purposes.

S. 2804. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 424 South Michigan Street in South Bend, Indiana, as the ''John Brademas Post Office''.

S. 3062. An act to modify the date on which the Mayor of the District of Columbia submits a performance accountability plan to Congress, and for other purposes.

S. Con. Res. 145. Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress on the propriety and need for expeditious construction of the National World War II Memorial at the Rainbow Pool on the National Mall in the Nation's Capitol.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) for 5 minutes.

U.S. SHOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO ISRAELI POSITION IN MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I am here to express my disagreement with the decision of the President of the United States to have the United States abstain on a resolution that was unfairly critical of the State of Israel in the U.N. Security Council. I recognize that the administration worked hard using the threat of a veto to make that resolution less obnoxious, but it was still mistaken, and I want to express why I think so.

It was mistaken on two levels. First of all, on its own terms it was unfair. Yes, Israeli forces and Jewish residents of Israel have in this terrible turmoil, some of them, done things they should not have done. Violence is not easily controllable. But there have also been terrible acts of violence, unjustified and provoked, on the part of the Palestinians, and, in Lebanon, on the part of Hezbollah, and a resolution which puts all the blame on one side when there are mistakes made on both sides is wrong.

But it is even more inaccurate and inadequate because it focuses too much on the tactical and not on the central point. The central point is that the government of Israel has been for the past year engaged in the most forthcoming peace offers in the history of the Middle East, and the tragedy is that this outreach on the part of the Israeli government to make peace on several fronts has been so overwhelmingly rejected.

We had the spectacle of an Israeli withdrawal in Lebanon which the Arab states had long called for being treated almost as if it were a further error by Israel. The effort by Israel to be conciliatory there brought the worst kind of brutal reaction.

With regard to the Palestinians, let us be clear what the situation is. Fifty-two years ago, when the U.N. declared that there should be two states in the area, a Jewish state and a Palestinian state, the overwhelming reaction of the Arabs was to reject that and to seek to destroy the Jewish state. Over the ensuing years, Israel was forced time and again to defend itself. In the course of that effort, it grew. It grew to try to get more defensible borders; but in every case, it was acting in self-defense.

What then happened was the government of Prime Minister Barak decided to build on previous peacemaking efforts of the government of Begin and of others and tried to make an ultimate agreement with the Palestinians, and the Barak government went further in its offer than anyone thought it was possible for the Israeli society to support. Israel is a democracy, and you need public support. But they obviously felt, those in power in Israel, and I commend them for it, that it was worth some extra push to try to get peace.

Unfortunately, the result apparently was not simply a rejection of the specific offer with the wholly unrealistic demand that a democratically elected government of Israel give up physical and legal sovereignty over parts of Jerusalem, an impossibility, but also now with an assault on the government of Israel by the Palestinians, which we are told is motivated by a distrust of the peace process, by a denial of Israel's legitimacy.

We are not here talking about tactical issues. We are not talking about a reaction by the decision of Ariel Sharon to be provocative, and I wish he had not decided to be provocative, but he had a legal right to do that, and certainly the reaction to it is not now a reaction to Ariel Sharon's visit; it is a manifestation of great hostility on the part of much of the Arab world to the very existence of Israel, and that is the ultimate tragedy.

Some in Israel and elsewhere thought the Barak government went too far in its efforts. I think the current situation vindicates them in this sense: it may well be that what we are seeing is an outburst of hostility towards the very existence of Israel as a Jewish state that was there and was going to come in any case. Had it come a couple of years ago, there would have been people saying, well, the Israelis should have been willing to try to make peace.

When it comes now, with the Barak government having been so forthcoming, so conciliatory, and, remember, we are talking here about a state which was forced to defend itself in a war, which gained some territory in those self-defense wars, and is now voluntarily giving up much of that territory, I do not think there is an example in history of a nation forced to defend itself and picking up adjacent territory being as conciliatory as the Israelis have been. And if in fact this approach, such a willingness to make peace, is so bitterly rejected, if in fact what we are seeing, and we are told this is not just anger over Sharon, anger over a particular this or that or the settlement, but a frustration and a rejection of the whole notion of peace, then that is a sad lesson we have to draw.

I think the policy of the United States government ought to be very clear: Israel has a right to exist. It has a right to make policies in the peacemaking process that leave it defensible and that protect its right to maintain control and sovereignty in Jerusalem; and, if in fact, as good a settlement as Barak offered is met with this sort of rejection, our response should be to be totally supportive of the government of Israel's position.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject matter of the remarks to be presented by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

IN TRIBUTE TO RETIRING AND DECEASED VIRGINIA MEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 19, 1999, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to rise today and to join fellow members of the Virginia delegation in paying tribute to two retiring colleagues and to honor the memory of our late colleague, Congressman Herb Bateman.

TOM BLILEY came to Congress with me in 1981. It has been an honor to serve side by side with him for the last 20 years. TOM has been a fitting match for Virginia's seventh district, which includes the city of Richmond, as it is a district replete with a tradition of true statesmen.

TOM will leave the Congress having served as chairman of the Committee on Commerce, a responsibility he has taken very seriously and has performed with incredible legislative skills and expertise. He has shown an amazing ability to deal with such complex