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THE MESS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

“There is no quick solution to what is going on in the Middle East,” said Dr. Steven Porter, the Democratic candidate for Congress running in the 3rd district of Pennsylvania against six-term conservative Republican incumbent Phil English. “The forces of history and the stupidity of the Bush policies have made the situation a horrendous mess.

“There is no question that the provocations of Hezbollah have set off an Israeli reaction which is now taking a toll on both Arab and Israeli civilians. There is also no question that Bush’s invasion of Iraq contributed to the surge of Islamic resentment which has in turn led to the election of Hamas in Gaza, a defiant regime in Iran, and a huge wave of global terrorism,” Porter went on. “But I think it would be a monumental mistake to play the blame game now or to turn our backs on the human misery on both sides of the fighting.

“Ambassador Bolton’s statement, if I read it right, that the suffering of Lebanese civilians is somehow not equivalent to the suffering of Israeli civilians is, if true, barbaric. More than that, it is only going to make it harder for America to be an honest broker in the peace process that will inevitably have to come.

“A cease-fire, a return to even-handed negotiations, and the establishment of a two-state Israeli-Palestinian solution to the conflict where the sovereignty of both states is respected by all are the only real choices we have. Toward those ends, our policy and the policy of the entire world must be directed, and to do that, we must accept the premise that **all** human suffering is wrong.

“In his great novel, Lost Horizons, James Hilton described a Shangri-La where the rule of human behavior was based upon two words: ‘Be kind.’ We would do well to remember this wisdom in our dealings today with hatreds that have been exacerbated by centuries of greed and repression. In the end, kindness will be our greatest diplomacy.”

All of Dr. Porter’s positions are attached to this press release so that the media can disseminate them to the public.